Archaeology and History of Urartu (Biainili)

Edited by
Gocha R. Tsetskhladze

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ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORY OF URARTU (BIAINILI)

Dedicated to the memory of
Prof. Altan Çilingiroğlu

Edited by

GOCHA R. TSETSKHLADZE

with the assistance of
ALTAN ÇILINGIROĞLU (†), MAHMUT BILGE BAŞTÜRK
and JAMES HARGRAVE

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Prof. Altan Çilingiroğlu
(1944–2021)

PREFACE

Urartu is still less well known than it should be, despite the best efforts of many of the contributors to the current work. Thus I am particularly pleased that this volume has finally seen the printed page. It has been long in the course of preparation and that course has not 'run smooth'. Health problems and personal commitments on the part of the original editors brought about delays, as did late submissions and failures to submit. I was convinced that we should persist with it when so much work had already been done and, unwillingly, took over as volume editor (with the assistance of James Hargrave). Though the work is slightly less extensive than was first intended, nonetheless, in 21 chapters it offers a very broad coverage of aspects of Urartu, the scholarship on Urartu and the principal Urartian sites. It may still leave unclear whether the Urartian state was centralised or decentralised, both (over time) or neither – but probably there are as many opinions as contributors.

I am not a complete outsider to Urartu and its study: I was fascinated at school and university by the books of B.B. Piotrovsky, and later when his diaries were published. My first opportunity to visit Urartu came in 2001 through an invitation to participate in the Anatolian Iron Ages Symposium in Van. I grabbed this possibility, and I have never regretted doing so. Thanks to the excellent hospitality of Altan Çilingiroğlu and his pupils (especially Mahmut Bilge Başẗurk), the symposium itself, visits to museums and excursions around many Urartian sites, my interest in Urartu was broadened and deepened – I even published a few articles on Urartian antiquities in Transcaucasia (surprisingly, I find these cited in the present volume).

I am privileged to publish here a contribution by Charles Burney, doyen of Urartian studies. Of course, I knew of the book he wrote jointly with David Lang on Transcaucasia. I had corresponded with Charles in my capacity of Vice President of the Oxford University Central Asia and Caucasia Society when we were planning to hold a one-day conference on David Lang. For various reasons, alas, this never took place; but I met Charles at the conference in Van, (where I also met many of the other authors represented here) and have kept in touch with him ever since.

I am grateful to Mahmut Bilge Başẗurk for collecting and selecting papers and for his work on the earlier stages of the project, and to Yervand Grekyan for stepping into the breach and providing at short notice an Introduction to the volume, in addition to his two existing substantial chapters.

Some very experienced scholars have been involved (Areshian, Burney, Çilingiroğlu, Kroll, Muscarella, Radner, Seidl, Stronach, Tarhan and Zimansky) alongside younger colleagues such as Batmaz, Çifçi (see also his contributions to *AWE* 17 [2018] and 19 [2020]), Grekyan (see also his contribution to *AWE* 17 [2018]), etc., and I was determined that their combined efforts and insights should not go to waste. It is a matter of deep sadness and regret that both David Stronach (Berkeley) and Gregory Areshian (American University of Armenia) died while the volume was being typeset.

The dreadful news of the death of Altan Çilingiroğlu arrived when the volume was in proof. I felt that it should be dedicated to his memory, something that all the authors supported, particularly since he, some of his pupils and his own PhD supervisor, Charles Burney, are numbered among the contributors. Altan Bey was famous in Urartian studies. He excavated many sites but his greatest achievement was at Ayanis, where he directed the excavations from 1989 to 2012. Another significant contribution was his inauguration of the Anatolian Iron Ages symposium, the first held in 1984, the last in 2010, which, with promptly published proceedings (latterly by Peeters), transformed the study of the Anatolian Iron Age. I express my gratitude to his pupil, Attila Bamaz, for providing the photograph published here.

Transliteration can never be entirely satisfactory. In standardising contributions we have preferred to eschew diacritics as far as possible: hence ‘sh’, not š, and a simple h in place of ḫ (thus, Argishtihinili and not Argištiḫinili). Of course, in certain cases, especially when transcribing texts, this has not been possible.

My thanks as ever to Peeters for publication and to Bert Verrept for his personal involvement.

Gocha R. Tsetskhladze
Series Editor

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Fig. 4. Helm aus Ayanis mit Inschriften von Ishpuini und Rusa Argishtihi (Nach Çilingiroğlu und Salvini 2001, 181, Fig. 13, Nr. 59).

Fig. 5. Helm der Sammlung Ebnöther, Schaffhausen (Zeichnung C. Wolff).

Fig. 6. Siegelbild von Rusa Argishtihi aus Bastam (Zeichnung U. Seidl).

Fig. 7. Wagen und Reiter auf einem breiten Bronzegürtel (br-8) (Zeichnung C. Wolff).

Fig. 8. Zentrale Figurengruppe auf Gürtel sm-7 (Zeichnung U. Seidl).

Fig. 9. Zentrale Figurengruppe auf Gürtel sm-37 (Zeichnung U. Seidl).

Fig. 10. Zentrale Figurengruppe auf Gürtel (Ziffer 2002, belt 3, Fig. 3).

Fig. 11. Gürtel sm-36. (Zeichnung Archäologische Staatssammlung München).

Fig. 12. Burgdarstellungen auf Gürteln; a: sm-7; b: sm-8; c: sm-12; d: sm-19 (Zeichnungen a–c: U. Seidl; d: Archäologische Staatssammlung München).

Fig. 13. Rechte Seite des Gürtels sm-6 (Zeichnung Archäologische Staatssammlung München).

Fig. 14. a. b: Burgmodell aus Terrakotta (Foto: Yeganeh).

Fig. 15. Votivblech, Orantin vor Göttin (Zeichnung U. Seidl).

Fig. 16. Votivblech (Foto: Musée du Louvre, Paris).

Fig. 18. Fragmentarischer Gürtel sm-14 (Zeichnung U. Seidl).

Fig. 17. Votivblech (Zeichnung U. Seidl).

Fig. 19. Zwei Votivbleche, Assistenzgöttinnen mit Kuh und Vogel (a: Caner 1998, Nr. 177; b: Nr. 176) (Zeichnungen U. Seidl).

CHAPTER 10 (*Muscarella*)

Fig. 1. Sargon II's sack of Musasir (714 BC).

Fig. 2. Votive plaque (after Işik 1986).

Fig. 3. Bronze belt (courtesy Metropolitan Museum of Art).

Fig. 4. Belt terminals (after Kellner 1991a, pl. 87).

Fig. 5. Helmets from Ayanis (after Çilingorğlu and Salvini 2001).

Fig. 6. Arrows from Ayanis (after Derin and Muscarella 2001).

Fig. 7. Shield from Ayanis (after Derin and Çilingorğlu 2001).

Fig. 8. Urartian fibulae (top from Adilcevaz) (after Belli 2010).

Fig. 9. Statuettes from Karmir-Blur, Darabey, Van area (after van Loon 1991).

Fig. 10. Statuette from Toprakkale (after Wartke 1990).

Fig. 11. Throne piece (courtesy Metropolitan Museum of Art).

Fig. 12. Reconstructions of Toprakkale throne (after Seidl 1996).

Fig. 13. Statuettes from Toprakkale.

Fig. 14. Candelabrum from Toprakkale (after Seidl 1996).

Fig. 15. Horse cheek piece (courtesy Metropolitan Museum of Art).

Fig. 16. Bell (courtesy Metropolitan Museum of Art).

Fig. 17. Giyimli plaque (courtesy Van Museum).

Fig. 18. Gold jewellery (Muscarella files).

Fig. 19. Gold medallion (courtesy Metropolitan Museum of Art).

Fig. 20. Bull and siren protomes from Alishar (after Piotrovsky 1967).

CHAPTER 12 (*Batmaz*)

Fig. 1. Map of Urartu, showing ancient and modern settlements, fortresses, locations of inscriptions, etc.

Fig. 2. Relief map of Urartu.

CHAPTER 13 (*Köroğlu*)

Fig. 1. Urartian western border region and neighbouring areas.

Fig. 2. Palu, Urartian provincial centre and River Murat.

Fig. 3. Urartian inscription at Palu.

Fig. 4. Urartian multi-roomed rock-cut tomb at Palu.

Fig. 5. Urartian provincial centre at Mazgirt-Kaleköy (photograph by E. Konyar).

Fig. 6. Urartian rock-cut tomb at Mazgirt-Kaleköy (photograph by E. Konyar).

Fig. 7. Kaleköy inscription (photograph by E. Konyar).

CHAPTER 14 (*Karaosmanoğlu*)

Fig. 1. General view of Altıntepe from the north-east.

Fig. 2. Temple of Haldi, Altıntepe.

Fig. 3. Temple of Haldi, Altıntepe. Reconstruction (drawing by S. Kuşu).

Fig. 4. Reconstruction that shows five *avant-corps* on the courtyard wall (drawing by S. Kuşu).

Fig. 5. Sewerage system of Altıntepe in irregular planned courtyard.

Fig. 6. General plan of Altıntepe.

Fig. 7. Pool paved with pebbles.

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Fig. 9. Hypogeum paved with flat stones.

Fig. 10. Storage building at east of the temple complex.

Fig. 11. Hieroglyphs with scraped scratches and embossed crescent-shaped decorations on pithoi.

Fig. 12. Squat toilet.

Fig. 13. Plan of citadel belonging to first phase and second phase.

Fig. 14. Reconstruction of the kitchen (drawing by M.A. Yılmaz).

Fig. 15. General view of the Apadana.

CHAPTER 15 (*Çilingiroğlu* [†] and *Batmaz*)

Fig. 1. Localisation of Ayanis Fortress.

Fig. 2. General view of the fortress and surroundings.

Fig. 3. Southern basalt fortifications.

Fig. 4. Blocked access in the gate chamber.

Fig. 5. 3D reconstruction of temple area (drawing by S. Kuşu).

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Fig. 7. Domestic buildings.

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Fig. 11. Door fittings.

Fig. 12. Churn (*yayık*) uncovered from one of the western storage rooms (West Magazines).

Fig. 13. Bronze vessels found from western storage rooms (West Magazines).

Fig. 14. A broken school tablet from depots of the Pillared Hall.

Fig. 15. Ploughshares and a basic model of a plough.

Fig. 16. Pithoi excavated in the eastern storage rooms (East Magazines).

CHAPTER 16 (*Zimansky* 2)

Fig. 1. Site plan imposed on Google Earth Image. Note north orientation differs somewhat from published plans.

Fig. 2. Bastam citadel structures (modified from plan in Kleiss 1988).

Fig. 3. Bastam settlement area and related public buildings: A) *Nordgebäude* (after Kleiss 1973, 37); B) domestic buildings (after Kroll 1988, 85); and C) *Hallenbau* (after plans in Kleiss 1979, 35 with additional material from Kleiss 1988, 25).

Fig. 4. Settlement area from citadel in 1977 (photograph by author).

Fig. 5. Inscriptions bearing the ancient name of Bastam from pithoi in *Hallenbau*. Incised characters have been enhanced with chalk dust to increase visibility (photograph by author).

Fig. 6. Bastam citadel from north-east (photograph by author).

Fig. 7. Royal sealings of Rusa son of Argishti from Bastam bone rooms (photograph by author). For descriptions and analysis, see Seidl 1988.

Fig. 8. Platform in Middle Castle where temple might have stood (photograph by author).

Fig. 9. East building (*Ostbau*) at Bastam (after Kleiss 1988, 16).

Fig. 10. Inscribed objects from Bastam: A) bulla with date formula of Rusa son of Argishti (text edition in Salvini 1988, 130); and B) tablet fragment (text edition in Salvini 1988, 128) (photograph by author).

CHAPTER 17 (*Tarhan* 1)

Fig. 1. Bol mountain chain, Upper Fortress and Lower Fortress from the north-west (photograph by A. Çilingiroğlu).

Fig. 2. Upper Fortress and Lower Fortress from the north-east, on the right Van–Hakkâri highway (photograph by A. Çilingiroğlu).

Fig. 3. Plan of Sardurihinili/Çavuştepe Fortress (adapted by author from Erzen 1988, fig. 1).

Fig. 4. Historical road between Tushpa and Musasir (author; drawing by T. Erel).

Fig. 5. Draft plan of Sardurihinili/Çavuştepe Fortress in 1899 (after Lehmann-Haupt 1926).

Fig. 6. Draft plan of Asbaşın Fortress in 1956 (after Burney 1957, pl. 4a).

Fig. 7. Realisation of the Sardurihinili/Çavuştepe Fortress (M. Taner Tarhan and E. Konyar).

Fig. 8. Reconstruction of topographical situation plan of the Sardurihinili Fortress: (1) Historical/military/sacred road from Tushpa to Musasir, (2) Double-sloped road, (3) Open air cistern, (4) Main gate, (5) Sacred rock mark, (6) Fortified road, (7) Sacred rock platform, (8) Haldi temple, (9) Entrance of *temenos*, (10) Outer entrance, (11) Eastern moat, (12) Irmushini temple, (13) Pillared hall and, to the north of it, rooms and workshops of prayers, (14) Monumental entrance building, (15) The temple of the King's Cult-Uç Kale, (16) Provincial Palace, (17) Western moat, (18) Natural rock cleft, (19) Provisions road, (20) Grand tower, (21) Royal storehouses and depots, (22) Front buildings, (23) Barracks road, (24) Entrance tower, (25) Barracks and stables (author).

Fig. 9. Open air cistern, from the north (drawing by A. Dai; after Erzen 1988, fig. 48).

Fig. 10. Sacred rock mark (author's archive).

Fig. 11. Plan of the Upper Fortress (adapted by author from Erzen 1977a, fig. 8).

Fig. 12. (1) Plan of the Haldi temple, (2) Situation plan of entrance and cella, (3) Façade from the east, (4) Inner view of the cella and the entrance, from the west, at the north–south section, (5) Original view of the cella ground in the Urartian period, (6) Situation plan and modifications in the Middle Ages (adapted from Erzen 1977a, figs. 9–12; new representation by author).

Fig. 13. Haldi temple, from the east (author's archive).

Fig. 14. Reconstruction of the Haldi temple (author).

Fig. 15. Plundering of the Haldi temple at Musasir, by Assyrians in 714 BC. From the relief in palace of Sargon II (721–705 BC) at Khorsabad (after P.E. Botta and E. Flandin, *Monuments de Ninive*, vol. 2 [Paris 1849], pl. 141).

Fig. 16. Plan of the metal workshop: (1–6) Smelting furnaces, (7) Pit for ash and coal wastes, (8) North-west corner of the Haldi temple, (9) Entrance of the workshop, (10) Entrance for control of workers and productions (adapted from Başaran 1989, pl. 171.1; new plan by author; drawing by B. Batıkan).

Fig. 17. Plan of the Lower Fortress (adapted from Erzen 1978a, pl. 23.1; new plan in detail by author; drawing by B. Batıkan).

Fig. 18. Plan of the Irmushini temple and its private buildings (adapted from Erzen 1972a, fig. 4; new plan in detail by author; drawing by B. Batıkan).

Fig. 19. Irmushini temple and sacrifice-libation table, from the east (author's archive).

Fig. 20. Inscription of the Irmushini temple (author's archive).

Fig. 21. Reconstruction of the Irmushini temple (author).

Fig. 22. Round rock altar in the courtyard of the Irmushini temple (author's archive).

Fig. 23. Round rock altar, in the 'sacred place', the north corridor of the Irmushini temple (photograph by E. Konyar).

Fig. 24. Plan of the Irmushini temple (author's archive).

Fig. 25. The temple of the King's Cult-Uç Kale, from the east (author's archive).

Fig. 26. (1) Plan of the temple of the King's Cult-Uç Kale, (2) View from the south, (3) North–south section (drawing by Ü. Sirel; author's archive).

Fig. 27. Reconstruction of the temple of the King's Cult, inner view from the south (author).

Fig. 28. Blind window (author's archive).

Fig. 29. Comparative appearances: (1) Relief from cult building at Adilcevaz Kef Kalesi, (2) Reconstruction of the temple of the King's Cult from the north (author), (3) Plan of the northern part of the temple (author's archive).

Fig. 30. Plans of the three temples (author).

Fig. 31. Provincial Palace, from the west (author's archive).

Fig. 32. Plan of the Provincial Palace (adapted from Erzen 1972a, fig. 5; new plan in detail by author; drawing by B. Batıkan).

Fig. 33. Reconstruction of the Provincial Palace, inner view from the west (author).

Fig. 34. Cistern no. 1: (1) Plan, (2) Eastern, (3) Southern, (4) Western, (5) Northern sections (after Erzen 1985, pls. 5.2–3, 6.1).

Fig. 35. Toilet stone (author's archive).

Fig. 36. Royal grand depot, from the north (author's archive).

Fig. 37. Looking from the Upper Fortress to the Lower Fortress: from the east to the west, fortified road, double-sloped road, front buildings, the temple of the King's Cult-Uç Kale, eastern walls of the Lower Fortress, royal storehouses and depots, Irmushini temple, Provincial Palace; on the left below, Çavuştepe village and Gürpınar plain (author's archive).

Fig. 38. A–B. Plans of the front buildings for phases IA and IB; C. Axonometric plan of the front buildings, on the left double-sloped road, courtyard and Main Gate, fortified road to the Upper Fortress and terrace walls to the south. Section and plan of the buildings (adapted by author from Erzen 1988, figs. 4, 12, 14).

Fig. 39. A. Axonometric plan of the front buildings: Main Gate and fortified road on the left; B. Reconstruction of the front buildings and Uç Kale (drawing by A. Dai; after Erzen 1988, figs. 7, 20, 22).

Fig. 40. Plan of the staging post building at Çermik (after Erzen 1988, fig. 13).

Fig. 41. Lower Fortress from the north; from east to the west, the temple of the King's Cult, northern walls, Irmushini temple, Provincial Palace, and close to its end, natural rock cleft (author's archive).

CHAPTER 18 (*Areshian*[†] and *Stronach*[†])

Fig. 1. Erebuni. The shaded portion of the plan indicates the area within which most of the more recent excavations took place between 2008 and 2016 (after Deschamps 2016, fig. 4).

Fig. 2. Plan of the citadel at Erebuni. The plan shows the extent of Hovhannisyan's excavations towards the end of the 1950s. Note especially the eroded condition of the west flank of the site. The top of the plan is oriented towards conventional north (after Khodzhash *et al*. 1979, fig. 3).

Fig. 3. Hovhannisyan's plan of the citadel at Erebuni (adapted from Hovhannisyan 1973, fig. 1). Note that excavated walls of Urartian date and modern 'restored' walls are both shown in black.

Fig. 4. Plan of the temple of Haldi and the Thirty-Columned Hall (adapted, in part, from Deschamps 2016, fig. 12).

1. The temple of Haldi. 2. The L-shaped M3 wall that flanked the west side and part of the north side of the north terrace of the temple of Haldi and, subsequently, the same sides of the Period II Thirty-Columned Hall. 3. The south passage. 4. The east passage. 5. The location of a secondary mud-brick pylon. 6. The south wall of the hall. 7. The north-east wall of the hall. 8. The white-plastered mud-brick bench of the Thirty-Columned Hall. 9. The main entrance to the hall. 10. A cobbled area within the central courtyard. 11. The arrow points towards the location of the South Palace of Argishti. 12. A Period II structure with mud-brick vaulting struts. 13. A possible, blocked 'north entrance' to the north terrace. 14. Entrance to the Great Palace. 15. Location of the long-lived *susi* temple and the Period II peristyle court.

Fig. 5. Hovhannisyan's proposed plan of the temple of Haldi at Erebuni. Unfortunately, the plan includes certain architectural features that are imaginary (such as a non-existent doorway) and other elements that clearly post-date the active life of the temple (such as part of the bench of the Period II Thirty-Columned Hall) (after Hovhannisyan 1961, fig. 25a).

Fig. 6. Reconstruction of a 'standard' Urartian temple (after Kleiss 1976, fig. 27).

Fig. 7. Plan of the partly buttressed walls of the core structure of the temple of Haldi at Erebuni. Note the location of the red-painted recess (1) and that of the inscription of Argishti I on the east face of the north-eastern buttress (2). Note also that a single rabbet on the west side of the doorway was not certainly matched by a corresponding rabbet on the east side of the doorway (after Stronach *et al*. 2010, fig. 6).

Fig. 8. The partly rock-cut entrance passage of the temple of Haldi, viewed from the north. Also just visible (beyond the far end of the doorway) is part of the brickwork of the pylon that was constructed within the cella, presumably at the time that the temple was being prepared for permanent closure (after Stronach *et al*. 2010, pl. 31.1).

Fig. 9. An inscribed bronze shield (decorated with concentric rows of embossed and engraved lions and bulls) that was dedicated to Haldi by Argishti I. Following the shield's transfer from Erebuni to Karmir-Blur, it was recovered during Piotrovsky's excavations at the latter site (photograph courtesy of the Museum of History of Armenia, Yerevan).

Fig. 10. A restored painting of Haldi, shown standing on the figure of a striding lion. The painting originally stood on the eastern face of the M3 wall (after Hovhannisyan 1973, pl. 46).

Fig. 11. The upper part of the red-painted recess on the entrance façade of the temple of Haldi as it appeared at the end of the 2009 season of excavations (after Stronach *et al*. 2010, pl. 32.2).

Fig. 12. Vivid red paint recorded in the lower part of the painted recess soon after it was exposed in 2010 (after Stronach *et al*. 2010, pl. 33.2).

Fig. 13. The north-east corner of the cella of the temple of Haldi. Note that the stone socle of the north wall of the cella (seen on the left) rises to a greater height than the socle of the adjoining east wall (after Stronach *et al*. 2010, pl. 30.1).

Fig. 14. A section cut through the south mud-brick wall of the Thirty-Columned Hall, where it abuts against the north wall of the temple of Haldi. From left to right one can observe the mud bricks of the south wall of the columned hall; the vertical line of clay plaster that still adheres to the north side of the north wall of the temple; and the rabbets on the east side of the painted recess following the removal of the recess's painted, plastered surface by members of the technical staff of the Erebuni Museum (after Deschamps *et al*. 2011, pl. 19.1).

Fig. 15. Note the cobbled surface of the central court (in the foreground) and the low bosses on the finely dressed andesite blocks that line the exterior of the low socle of the wall near the south-east corner of the Thirty-Columned Hall (after Stronach *et al*. 2010, pl. 39.2).

Fig. 16. A general view of the Thirty-Columned Hall, facing south, soon after it was discovered (after Hovhannisyan 1961, fig. 39). Note especially the mainly smooth, level condition of the floor (apart from two places where slightly displaced sub-floor column supports appear to have been slightly disturbed) and the intact condition of much of the bench near the south west corner of the hall, to the left of the standing figure.

Fig. 17. A roughly shaped 'column support', cut from locally available tuff, that originally stood below floor level in the Period II Thirty-Columned Hall. The stone in question owes its present above-floor-level-elevation to the presence of a modern concrete insert that was introduced in 1968 (after Stronach *et al*. 2010, pl. 41.2).

Fig. 18. A schematic reconstruction of a column base from the columned hall of Median date at Tepe Nush-i Jan (after Stronach and Roaf 2007, fig. 7.4).

Fig. 19. The north end of the interior face of the east wall of the columned hall, viewed from the west. Here a quantity of small reddish-buff stones can be seen to rest against the internal face of the wall. Also, although the excavations in the 1950s more or less completely removed the mud-brick bench in this vicinity, a strong white plaster line in the floor still documents the position of the former front edge of the bench (after Stronach *et al*. 2010, pl. 40.2).

Fig. 20. A reconstruction of part of the interior of the largest room of Erebuni's Period II 'building with mud-brick struts' (after Hovhannisyan 1961, fig. 53).

Fig. 21. A 1/16 (silver) stater, minted at Miletus before 494 BC and recovered near the doorway of the *susi* temple (photograph courtesy of the Museum of History of Armenia, Yerevan; MHA no. 17541/1).

Fig. 22. A 1/16 (silver) stater, minted at Miletus before 494 BC and recovered near the doorway of the *susi* temple (photograph courtesy of the Museum of History of Armenia, Yerevan; MHA no. 17541/2).

Fig. 23. Fragment of a restored wall-painting from the audience hall of the Great Palace. Bulls resting on one knee face each other on opposite sides of a concave-sided square (photograph courtesy of the Museum of History of Armenia, Yerevan).

Fig. 24. Fragment of a wall-painting from the audience hall of the South Palace. Following the completion of a royal hunt, one of the king's prized chariot-horses is released from its duties (after Hovhannisyan 1973, pl. 35).

Fig. 25. A silver rhyton from Erebuni with a horse protome (photograph courtesy of the Erebuni Museum).

Fig. 26. A detail of the lower portion of the silver rhyton from Erebuni with a horse-and-rider motif (drawing by T. Nersesyan; University of California at Berkeley Expedition to Erebuni).

Fig. 27. A silver rhyton from Erebuni with a horse-and-rider motif (photograph courtesy of the Erebuni Museum).

Fig. 28. The figured scene on an animal-headed, partially gilt silver cup from Erebuni (drawing by T. Nersesyan).

Fig. 29. An animal-headed, partially gilt silver cup from Erebuni with figured decoration on the horn (photograph courtesy of the Erebuni Museum).

CHAPTER 19 (*Grekyan* 3)

Fig. 1. Karmir-Blur, general view to the citadel (photograph by author).

Fig. 2. From left to right Igor Diakonoff, Boris Piotrovsky, Yevgeny Bayburtyan and Karo Ghafadaryan having a rest during the excavations of Karmir-Blur (courtesy of the History Museum of Armenia).

Fig. 3. A stone idol, Early Iron Age settlement of Karmir-Blur, 13th–12th centuries BC (after S. Harutyunyan 2007, 76, fig. 31).

Fig. 4. Karmir-Blur, plan of the Urartian citadel (after Piotrovsky 1962, fig. 5).

Fig. 5. Karmir-Blur, reconstruction of the north-western gate of the citadel (after Hovhannisyan 1955, fig. 41).

Fig. 6. Karmir-Blur, reconstruction of the southern gate of the citadel (after Hovhannisyan 1955, fig. 40).

Fig. 7. The northern corridor on the ground floor, reconstruction (after Hovhannisyan 1955, fig. 22).

Fig. 8. A reconstruction of the openings below the ceilings to illuminate the upper rooms on the ground floor (after Hovhannisyan 1955, fig. 19).

Fig. 9. One of the largest cellars (hall no. 28) of the citadel with 72 pithoi, reconstruction (after Hovhannisyan 1955, fig. 28).

Fig. 10. The very cellar 'hall no. 28' after excavations (after Piotrovsky 1970, fig. 11).

Fig. 11. Another cellar (hall no. 40) at the citadel with 20 pithoi after excavations (after Piotrovsky 1970, fig. 9).

Fig. 12. Clay tablet, from the preserved part of the cuneiform archive of Karmir-Blur (after Piotrovsky 1970, fig. 15).

Fig. 13. The products of a potter's workshop at the citadel (after Piotrovsky 1970, fig. 15).

Fig. 14. Urartian bronze decorated shield, Karmir-Blur (after J. Santrot, *Arménie. Trésors de l'Arménie ancienne* [Paris/Nantes 1996], 134, fig. 109).

Fig. 15. Karmir-Blur, general plan of the site, including the 'Outer City' (after Martirosyan 1961, fig. 94).

Fig. 16. Plan of an elite house, the so-called 'Megaron of Karmir-Blur' (after Hovhannisyan 1964, 29, fig. 1a).

Fig. 17. 'Megaron of Karmir-Blur', reconstruction (after Hovhannisyan 1964, 29, fig. 1).

Fig. 18. Plan of the 'state standard' multi-sectional building of Karmir-Blur (after Martirosyan 1961, figs. 98–99).

Fig. 19. Urartian inscribed bronze bowls found in a large pithos (after Piotrovsky 1970, fig. 62).

Fig. 20. Basalt stones of a pillar collapsed into a room of a ground floor from the 'pillared hall' of the upper floor (after Piotrovsky 1970, fig. 7).

CHAPTER 20 (*Tarhan* 2)

Fig. 1. Van Citadel from the Lake Van, north-western view (author's archive).

Fig. 2. Van Citadel and the Old City of Van in 1900. Plan prepared by a European traveller, adapted from Texier 1842, pl. 35, and Lynch 1901, 80–81 (author's archive).

Fig. 3. C. Texier's engravings: Van Citadel and the Old City of Van in 1839, from the south, the south-east and north-west (after Texier 1842, pls. 36–38).

Fig. 4. Painting by Jules Laurens: Old City of Van and Van Citadel in 1846, from the south-west (after Hommaire de Hell 1855, pl. 1).

Fig. 5. Painting by Jules Laurens (after Hommaire de Hell 1855, pl. 51).

Fig. 6. Van Citadel and the Old City of Van (author's archive).

Fig. 7. Plan of Tushpa (drawing by A. Şakar and Ü. Sirel).

Fig. 8. Van Citadel from the south-west (author's archive).

Fig. 9. Van Citadel from the north-east (author's archive).

Fig. 10. Sardursburg, from the Van Citadel, north-eastern view (author's archive).

Fig. 11. Sardursburg from the north-western corner (photograph by A. Çilingiroğlu).

Fig. 12. Sardursburg: measured drawings of the eastern, northern and western façades (drawing by Ü. Sirel).

Fig. 13. The inscription at the north-western corner (author's archive).

Fig. 14. Sacred rock niche with Assyrian inscription and tentative reconstruction (photograph by E. Konyar; drawing by author).

Fig. 15. Northern walls of the Inner Fortress, from the north-eastern corner (author's archive).

Fig. 16. Plan of the Inner Fortress (drawing by Ü. Sirel).

Fig. 17. The 'temple of the ancestors' cult': plan and tentative reconstruction (author's archive; drawings: author).

Fig. 18. The 'Thousand Steps' from the east (photograph by E. Konyar).

Fig. 19. Van Citadel and the Old City of Van, 17th century Ottoman miniature 'Kal'e-i Seng-i Vân/Fortress of Van Rock' (Topkapı Palace Archive handwritings, catalogue no. E. 94 87). (1) Sardursburg, (2) Tomb of Sarduri I, (3) The Little Tomb under the 'Grand Platform', (4) 'Cremation Tomb', (5) 'Eastern Tomb', (6) Tomb of Argishti I, (7) Tomb of 'Little Horhor Cave', (8) 'Little Tomb' below the Inner Fortress, (9) 'Thousand Steps', (10) Inscription of Xerxes I, (11) 'Horhor Gardens', (12) Suleyman the Magnificent Mosque–Süleyman Han Câmîi, (13) Grand Mosque-Ulu Câmîi/Câmî-i Kebir', (14) Sinaneddin Mosque–Sinâneddîn Câmîi/Red Minared–Kızıl Minare, (15) Husrev Pasha Mosque–Hüsrev Paşa Câmîi, (16) Kaya Chelebi Mosque–Kaya Çelebi Câmîi, (17) Pascha Palace–Paşa Sarayı, (18) Middle Gate–Orta Kapı/'Bâb-ı Orta', (19) Tebriz Gate–Tebriz Kapı, (20) Port Building Gate–İskele Kapı, (21) Lake Van–Van Gölü (numbering by author).

Fig. 20. Plans and sections of the monumental royal tombs at the 'Grand Platform' (drawing by Ü. Sirel).

Fig. 21. The monumental tomb of Sarduri I, on the left and the 'Eastern Tomb', on the right, from the south (photograph by E. Konyar).

Fig. 22. Façade of monumental tomb of Sarduri I, on the 'Grand Platform' and entrance of 'The Little Tomb', on left, under the platform, from the south (author's archive).

Fig. 23. Inner view of the main hall, entrance and window (photograph by E. Konyar).

Fig. 24. The tomb of Ishpuini, inner view of the main hall (author's archive).

Fig. 25. 'Eastern Tomb' from the west (author's archive).

Fig. 26. Plan and sections of the 'Eastern Tomb' (drawing by Ü. Sirel).

Fig. 27. Entrance of the 'Cremation Tomb', from the South (photograph by E. Konyar).

Fig. 28. Plan and section and inner view of the 'Cremation Tomb' (drawing by Ü. Sirel).

Fig. 29. Inner view of the niches in the 'Cremation Tomb' (photograph by E. Konyar).

Fig. 30. The annals of Argishti I and the rocks steps down to the entrance (author's archive).

Fig. 31. The entrances of the monumental tomb of Argishti I and 'The Little Horhor Cave' (author's archive).

Fig. 32. The curse prayer at the end of the annals (author's archive).

Fig. 33. Plan and sections of the monumental tomb of Argishti I (drawing by Ü. Sirel).

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Fig. 35. 'New Palace' from the west (author's archive).

Fig. 36. Plan of the 'New Palace' (drawing by Ü. Sirel and A. Şakar).

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Fig. 38. Tentative reconstruction of the 'New Palace' (drawing by author).

Fig. 39. Inner view, entrance and inscription of Minua's *sirshini* (author's archive).

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Fig. 41. Inscriptions of Minua's *tarmanili*, from the north (author's archive).

Fig. 42. Sacred area of the 'Mother and Daughter' from the north (photograph by A. Çilingiroğlu).

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Fig. 46. Monumental niches, canals for sacrificed animals blood (author's archive).

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AIA		*Anatolian Iron Ages*
	1	A. Çilingiroğlu (ed.), *Anadolu demir çağları* (tarihleri arasında İzmir'de yapılan I. Anadolu Demir Çağları Sempozyumu'na sunulan bildiriler 24–27 Nisan 1984) (Izmir 1987).
	2	A. Çilingiroğlu and D.H. French (eds.), *Anatolian Iron Ages* (The Proceedings of the Second Anatolian Iron Ages Colloquium held at İzmir, 4–8 May 1987) (BIAA Monograph 13; Oxbow Monograph 13) (Oxford 1991).
	3	A. Çilingiroğlu and D.H. French (eds.), *Anatolian Iron Ages 3* (Proceedings of the Third Anatolian Iron Ages Colloquium held at Van, 6–12 August 1990) (British School of Archaeology at Ankara Monograph 16) (London 1994).
	4	A. Çilingiroğlu and R.J. Matthews (eds.), *Anatolian Iron Ages 4* (Proceedings of the Fourth Anatolian Iron Ages Colloquium held at Mersin, 19–23 May 1997) (= *AS* 49 [London 1999]).
	5	A. Çilingiroğlu and G. Darbyshire (eds.), *Anatolian Iron Ages 5* (Proceedings of the Fifth Anatolian Iron Ages Colloquium held at Van, 6–10 August 2001) (British School of Archaeology at Ankara Monograph 61) (London 2005).
	6	A. Çilingiroğlu and A.G. Sagona (eds.), *Anatolian Iron Ages 6* (Proceedings of the Sixth Anatolian Iron Ages Colloquium held at Eskişehir, 16–20 August 2004) (*ANES* Suppl. 20) (Leuven 2007).
	7	A. Çilingiroğlu and A.G. Sagona (eds.), *Anatolian Iron Ages 7* (Proceedings of the Seventh Anatolian Iron Ages Colloquium held at Edirne, 19–24 August 2010) (*ANES* Suppl. 39) (Leuven 2012).
AJA		*American Journal of Archaeology*.
AJNES		*Aramazd: Armenian Journal of Near Eastern Studies*.
AMIran (*und Turan*)		*Archaologische Mitteilungen aus Iran (und Turan)*.
AnAnt		*Anatolia Antiqua*.
AnAr		*Anadolu Araştırmaları*.
ANES		*Ancient Near Eastern Studies*.
ARAB		D.D. Luckenbill, *Ancient Records of Assyria and Babylonia* (Chicago 1926–27).
AS		*Anatolian Studies*.
AST		*Araştırma Sonuçları Toplantısı*.
AWE		*Ancient West and East*.
BIAA		British Institute (of Archaeology) at Ankara.
CAH		*Cambridge Ancient History*.

CTU		M. Salvini, *Corpus dei Testi Urartei* (Documenta Asiana 8).
	1–3	*Le iscrizioni su pietra e roccia. I testi*, 3 vols. (Rome 2008).
	4	*Iscrizioni su bronzi, argilla altri supporti nuove iscrizioni su pietra paleografia generale* (Rome 2012).
	5	*Revisione delle epigrafi e nuovi testi su pietra e roccia (CTU A), dizionario urarteo schizzo grammaticale della lingua urartea* (Paris 2018).
IstMitt		*Istanbuler Mitteilungen*.
JAOS		*Journal of the American Oriental Society*.
JNES		*Journal of Near Eastern Studies*.
JRAS		*Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland*.
KST		*Kazı Sonuçları Toplantısı*.
KUB		*Keilschrifturkunden aus Boghazköi* (Berlin 1921–90).
KUKN		N.V. Harutyunyan [Arutjunjan], *Korpus urartskikh klinoobraznykh nadpisei* (Yerevan 2001).
TTKY		Türk Tarih Kurumu yayınlarından.
TÜBA-AR		*Türkiye Bilimler Akademisi Arkeoloji Dergisi/Turkish Academy of Sciences Journal of Archaeology*.
UKN		G.A. Melikishvili, *Urartskie Klinoobraznye Nadpisi* (Moscow 1960).
VDI		*Vestnik Drevnei Istorii*.

INTRODUCTION: THE CURRENT STATE OF URARTIAN STUDIES

Yervand GREKYAN

AN OVERVIEW OF THE HISTORY OF RESEARCH

On the bronze bands of the Balawat Gates of Shalmaneser III, king of Assyria (858–824 BC), episodes of the Assyrian campaigns conducted during his reign were memorialised. Some of the campaigns were directed towards the northern, mountainous regions. In one episode, warriors fighting in the mountains are depicted wearing high-crested helmets, armed with spears and bows, protected by small round shields. Another depicts a two-walled city enveloped in flame and its looting, the mutilated bodies of noblemen impaled on sharp sticks to die. The third episode depicts yoked and bound captives wearing the same high-crested helmets, while another presents a scene of sacrifice by a lake (Figs 1–4).[1] The Assyrian texts referring to these episodes inform us that the Assyrian army was fighting against a certain Aramu, whom those texts also name 'the Urartian'.[2]

Urartu was the Assyrian name given to the country to its north. That name was also attested in the inscriptions of Assurnasirpal II (884–858 BC), the predecessor of Shalmaneser III.[3] The early form of this toponym is mentioned first in the inscriptions of the Shalmaneser I (1263–1234 BC), a powerful king of the Middle Assyrian period.[4] There are hundreds of references to Urartu, the Urartian kings and Urartians in contemporary Neo-Assyrian sources.[5] The Babylonians called the country Urashtu and continued to use that name long after the end of the kingdom, eventually replacing it with the name Armina (i.e. Armenia) in later Babylonian inscriptions.[6] Urartu figures in the Old Testament as the 'Kingdom of Ararat', and is mentioned along with the Scythians,

[1] King 1915.
[2] For example, Grayson 1996, 140 (A.0.102.64).
[3] For example, Grayson 1991, 225 (A.0.101.2: 13).
[4] For example, Grayson 1987, 183 (A.0.77.1: 27).
[5] Here we should mention the up-to-date publications of Neo-Assyrian texts in the series The Royal Inscriptions of Mesopotamia, Assyrian Periods, The Royal Inscriptions of the Neo-Assyrian Period and State Archives of Assyria.
[6] Geller and Traina 2013.

Fig. 1. Balawat Gates, Band VII.1. Upper register: Urartians advancing into battle from the mountains (after King 1915, pl. 37).

Fig. 2. Balawat Gates, Band VII.3. Upper register: The burning of Arsashku, the royal city of Aramu, the Urartian (after King 1915, pl. 39).

a northern warlike nomadic people, and the land of the Manneans, a kingdom in north-western Iran of considerable size and power for some period of time (*Jeremiah* 51:27). The Urartian kings themselves called their land 'Biainili' in their own cuneiform inscriptions. In scholarly literature the terms 'Urartu' or 'Urartian' are in common use, also designating as 'Urartian' the language of the cuneiform texts left by those kings. At the same time, the increasing use of 'Biainili' in recent studies is noticeable.[7]

Fig. 3. Balawat Gates, Band II.4. Upper register: Slaughter of Urartians by the Assyrian soldiers. Lower register: Urartian prisoners (after King 1915, pl. 10).

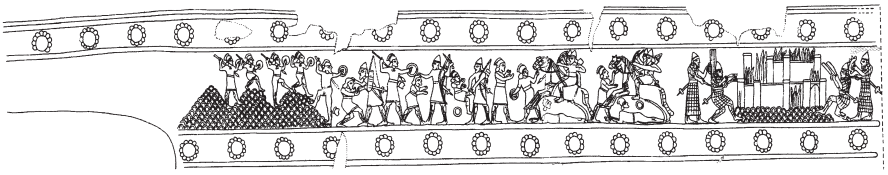

Fig. 4. Balawat Gates. The narrative depiction of the Assyrian campaign to Urartu in 856 BC (after Schachner 2007, 299, Taf. 7).

[7] Such as Kroll *et al*. 2012.

Fig. 5. Map of the key archaeological sites of Urartu.

Urartian culture was formed and developed in the 9th–7th centuries BC in the territories stretching eastwards from the Euphrates and covering the regions lying between Lake Van, Lake Sevan and Lake Urmia in present-day eastern Turkey, Armenia and north-western Iran (Fig. 5). The Urartian kingdom is represented by hundreds of fortresses, large administrative urban centres, highly developed communication networks, characteristic temples, rock-cut structures and extensive systems of canals stretching hundreds of kilometres, a unique spiritual and material culture, with its own cuneiform school.

The use of cuneiform writing for the ancient languages of Mesopotamia went out of use at the turn of the 1st century AD, being replaced by Greek and Aramaic as the common languages of the Near East. The cuneiform texts inscribed on the surface of rocks and stones, still visible to peoples of the following centuries, remained inexplicable and caused only wonderment. By tradition, the wise men attributed those strange writings to Semiramis, the Queen of Assyria, as did Moses Khorenatsi (Moses of Khorene, 5th century AD), the father of Armenian historiography:

> (Here that resolute and lascivious Semiramis) … over the entire surface of the rock, smoothing it like wax with a stylus, she inscribed many texts, the mere sight of which makes anyone marvel.

Then he continues:

> And not only this, but also in many places in the land of Armenia she set up stelae and ordered memorials to herself to be written on them in the same script. And in many places she fixed the boundaries with the same writing (Moses Khorenatsi 16).[8]

Seemingly, Khorenatsi was not familiar with the existence of Urartu, and whatever had remained from the Urartian period he and other representatives of Early Mediaeval Armenian historiography attributed to the Assyrian queen Semiramis.

Fourteen centuries had passed since the time of Moses Khorenatsi when Friedrich Eduard Schulz, a young scientist from Hesse, travelled in 1828 to the region of Van, an eastern *vilayet* of the Ottoman empire, with the aim of studying the 'amazing scripts' described by Khorenatsi. He managed to copy 42 cuneiform inscriptions and sent them to Paris. These texts were published in the *Journal Asiatique* (1840), eleven years after his tragic death in 1829, essentially originating the beginning of Urartian studies.

Though the texts copied by Schulz had not yet been deciphered, they were enough for scholars of the ancient Near East to pay attention to the Van region, among them (Félix Marie) Charles Texier, (Sir) Henry Rawlinson, (Sir) Austen Layard, Hormuzd Rassam, George Raynolds and Emilius Clayton.[9]

The first excavations were carried out in Van in the 1870s. Bishop Garegin Srvandztyants, an outstanding Armenian philologist-folklorist, an honorary member of the Imperial Archaeological Academy of St Petersburg, was an eyewitness to them. This is how he described his experience:

> There have been seen buildings of stone masonry, earthen vessels and cups under the soil heaps, some of which were filled with dry grains; details of an artificial stool made of gilded copper, a ram and a man set on it made of same casting copper in a shape of a figurine. … They say that iron arrowheads have been also found.[10]

From the beginning of the 1890s, the study of Urartian sites and monuments was continued by Waldemar Belck and Carl Friedrich Lehmann(-Haupt).[11] At the same time the first corpora of cuneiform inscriptions were published by Archibald Sayce, Mikhail Nikolsky, Joseph Sandalgian and Archbishop Mesrop Smbatyants.[12]

[8] Thomson 2006, 95–97.

[9] For more detail, see Paul Zimansky's immediately following contribution.

[10] Srvandztyants 1874, 132–33.

[11] For example, Belck 1901; Belck and Lehmann-Haupt 1892; 1894; Lehmann-Haupt 1926; 1931; etc.

[12] Sayce 1882a; 1882b; 1888; 1893; 1894; 1901; 1906; 1911; 1912; 1929; 1932; Nikolsky 1896; Sandalgian 1901; Smbatyants (unpublished manuscript), etc.

Gradually, the outlines of the tall masts of this shipwrecked culture began to be discerned from the fog of the past. Lehmann-Haupt called the bearers of this culture 'Khaldians' because of the frequent mention of the name of the god Haldi in Urartian inscriptions, as well as supposing that the *Chaldaioi* mentioned in ancient Greek sources were these very Khaldians. In the same fashion he named his two-volume study of Urartian inscriptions the *Corpus Inscriptionum Chaldicarum*.[13] This publication had a great influence on 'Khaldian studies', and the names Khaldians or Khaldistan came to figure in publications for several decades.[14]

By the mid-20th century new studies on the history and culture of Urartu were published.[15] An adornment to such studies was Boris Piotrovsky's *Vanskoe cartsvo* (*The Kingdom of Van*) published in 1959.[16] At the same period new corpora of cuneiform texts and studies on the Urartian language also appeared.[17]

Since the 1950s Soviet historical science held the leading position in the study of Urartian culture and offered a number of important works (despite the dominant Marxist ideological framework and the political bounds and constraints which quite often limited the work of Soviet scholars).[18] In this aspect the works by Igor Diakonoff on the social structure of early societies of the ancient Near East are worth mention.[19] The Soviet School of Urartian studies was created by the efforts of prominent scholars, Diakonoff, as mentioned above, and Georgi Melikishvili. Another two representatives of this school – Nikolai Harutyunyan and Margarit Khachikyan – wrote a number of works on Urartian inscriptions and Urartian philology.[20]

Urartu is a specific field of study. For many researchers who have published in this field, Urartu is only an episode, a way-station in their research life that grabs their attention for a minute. Only a few of them have contributed significantly, leaving no aspect of Urartian studies unvisited by their enquiry. Without underestimating the contributions of others, we should mention here the works of Altan Çilingiroğlu, Stephan Kroll, Mirjo Salvini, Ursula Seidl, Gernot Wilhelm and Paul Zimansky on the history, archaeology, philology, art and religion of Urartu.[21]

[13] Lehmann-Haupt 1928; 1935.
[14] For example, Meshchaninov 1927; Friedrich 1936; König 1955–57.
[15] Ghapantsyan 1940; Piotrovsky 1944.
[16] Piotrovsky 1959.
[17] Melikishvili 1954; 1960; 1971; König 1955–57; Diakonoff 1963a; 1971; Diakonoff and Starostin 1986; etc.
[18] Kohl 1991, xi–xx.
[19] Diakonoff 1963b; 1963c; 1967; 1968a; 1968b.
[20] Harutyunyan 2001 (*KUKN*); 2006; Khachikyan 1985.
[21] For example, Çilingiroğlu 1997; Kroll 1976; Salvini 1995; *CTU* 1–5; Salvini and Wegner 2014; Seidl 2004; Wilhelm 1986; 2004; Zimansky 1985; etc.

Over these past years, Urartian culture has continued to be studied by many prominent researchers from the former USSR, Europe, the United States, Turkey and Armenia. A few thousand academic works have been published.[22] A younger generation of scholars has also begun to prove their worth. It is due to the efforts of all these people that Urartu can be comprehensively presented to us.

The Archaeology of Urartu

If we divide Urartian studies into phases, and label each after an important Urartian centre, then the first should be named after Toprakkale, a site now in the limits of modern Van, former Tushpa, the capital city of the Urartian kingdom. Its partial excavation took place in the second half of the 19th century;[23] the most fruitful seasons were the works conducted in 1898–99 on behalf of the 'Armenische Expedition der Akademie der Wissenschaften' in Berlin, headed by Lehmann-Haupt (Fig. 6).[24] As would become clear later, the actual name of that site was 'Rusahinili in front of (Mt) Qilbani' (^{m}*rusahinili* ^{KUR}*qilbanikai*).

The second stage will undoubtedly be named after Karmir-Blur, Urartian 'City of Teisheba of (the land of) Waza' (^{D}*teišebaini*/^{D}IM-*ni* URU, ^{m}*'azaini* KUR-*ni* ^{d}IM-*ni* URU), located in the outskirts of modern Yerevan, on the left bank of Hrazdan river (Figs. 7–8). The excavations in Karmir-Blur were started in 1939, then temporarily abandoned in 1941 because of the Second World War, and continued again after 1945 until 1971, under the supervision of Piotrovsky. Karmir-Blur revealed not only valuable archaeological material, but in fact pointed to the beginning of a new stage in Urartian studies, marked by the gradual withdrawal from use of terms such as Khaldians or Khaldian studies.

Four volumes summarising the results of excavations at Karmir-Blur were brought to the reader's table.[25] The last of these was a separate study on the architecture of this site, and another volume was written to summarise research on the urban settlement of Karmir-Blur, including its Urartian and preceding Early Iron Age layers.[26] The excavations of Karmir-Blur and its rich archaeological materials stimulated the thorough study of Urartian art, and up to the

[22] For general studies on the history and culture of Urartu, see Zimansky 1998; Kroll *et al*. 2012, 451–502; and Çifçi 2017, 311–41 for extended bibliographical references.
[23] For history of early excavations see Genç 2018.
[24] Lehmann-Haupt 1907; Barnett 1950; Wartke 1990.
[25] Piotrovsky 1950; 1952; 1955; Hovhannisyan 1955.
[26] Martirosyan 1961.

Fig. 6. The walls of the *susi* temple of Haldi, Toprakkale, excavated by C.F. Lehmann-Haupt. Mt Varaga is seen in the background (after Lehmann-Haupt 1931, 458).

1980s the works devoted to Urartian art and culture were based largely on the material from Toprakkale and Karmir-Blur.[27]

The third phase can be named the 'Era of the Urartian imperial cities'. During this period, in the 1950s and 1960s, the excavations of the cities of Arin-Berd (^{URU}*er(e)buni*), Armavir or 'Argishtihinili (of the land of Waza)' (^{m}*argištehinili,* ^{m}*argištihina* ^{m}*'azani* KUR-*ni*) and Haykaberd/Çavuştepe (^{mD}*sardurihinili*), founded by the two most powerful Urartian kings, Argishti son Minua, and Sarduri son of Argishti, provided rich materials about urban planning and the city-building mindset, military architecture, as well as the economy and religion of Urartu in the imperial period (Figs. 9–12).[28]

The 1970s in Urartian archaeology can be named the 'Iranian Era': from 1968 to 1978, large-scale archaeological activities were carried out in the former Urartian territories in north-western Iran, around Lake Urmia, under

[27] For example, van Loon 1966.
[28] Hovhannisyan 1961; 1980; Martirosyan 1974; Erzen 1978.

Fig. 7. The hill of Karmir-Blur before excavations.

Fig. 8. Karmir-Blur. The fortification walls of the ‘citadel’ facing the inner yard (photograph by author).

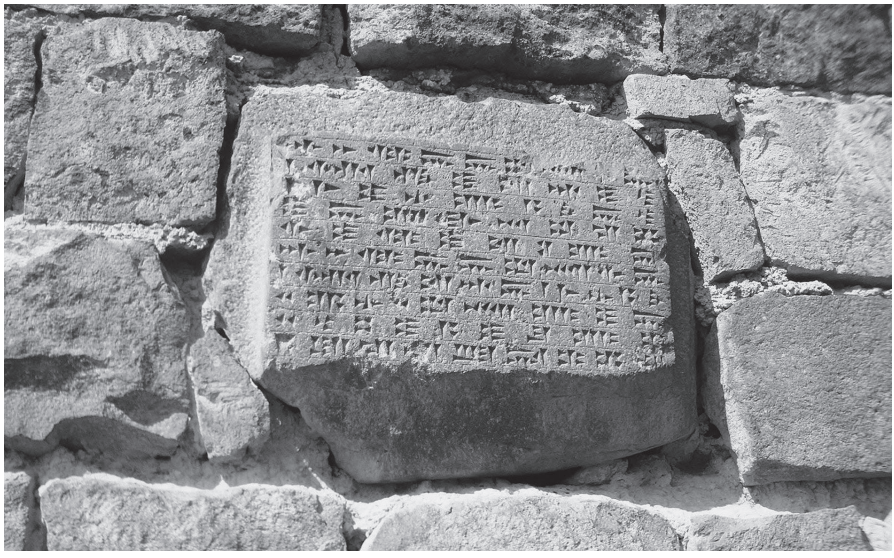

Fig. 9. Arin-Berd, the cuneiform inscription of Argishti son of Minua, recording about the construction of a ‘palace’ (É.GAL) (photograph by author).

Fig. 10. Armavir, 'Eastern citadel' (Armavir-Blur), general view of the hill (photograph by author).

Fig. 11. Armavir (Sb. Davti-Blur), second line of the fortification wall, the 'Western citadel' (photograph by author).

Fig. 12. General view of Haykaberd/Çavuštepe (photograph by S. Deschamps).

the supervision of Wolfram Kleiss and Stephan Kroll.[29] The focus of research was Bastam or 'Rusa's small city of (the land of) Alawani' (^{m}*rusai* URU.TUR, ^{m}*rusai* URU.TUR ^{KUR}*ala'ani*), as it was named by Rusa son of Argishti, the founder of the city (Fig. 13).[30] Bastam and other Urartian sites in Iran are well studied and even in this case the scientific potential of these sites has not been exhausted yet.

Rusa son of Argishti, mentioned above, is known in Urartian studies as the 'builder king'. The bulk of Urartian archaeological material has come from the cities he founded. One of these, in addition to Karmir-Blur and Bastam, is known in publications as Adilcevaz Kefkalesi, the Urartian 'City of (the god) Haldi of (the land of) Ziuquni' (^{D}*haldiei* URU ^{KUR}*ziuquni*). Excavations of the site were carried out in the mid-1960s but unfortunately provided only limited published results (Figs. 14–15).[31]

The next city was to symbolise the beginning of a new phase in Urartian studies, like Karmir-Blur in its time, is Ayanis, some 35 km north of Van, near the village Ağartı, on the eastern shores of Lake Van. Excavation of Ayanis,

[29] See the results of excavations published in the journal *AMIran*.
[30] Kleiss 1979; 1988.
[31] Bilgiç and Öğün 1966; Öğün and Bilgiç 1968.

Fig. 13. Bastam after the excavations (after Kleiss 1979, Taf. 3).

named by Rusa son of Argishti, its founder, as the 'City of Rusahinili in front of (Mt) Eiduru' (^{m}*rusahinili* ^{KUR}*eidurukai*), began in 1989, headed by Altan Çilingiroğlu, and continue to the present under the supervision of Mehmet Işıklı, providing scholars with a vast amount of both written and archaeological materials, and many ideas to consider (Figs. 16–18).[32]

Many things flow from the time when Charles Burney travelled by bicycle, then a strange means of transport in local eyes, to obtain measurements of Urartian fortresses.[33] His publications in *Anatolian Studies* served as a guide-book, whether desired or not, attracting the attention of scholars to study these monuments, also of others who simply wanted to find treasure within them.

The archaeology of Urartu has promising perspectives and even the sites excavated half a century ago still have solid potential – as the new excavations of Erebuni,[34] Sardurihinili,[35] Altıntepe[36] and Tushpa clearly show.[37]

[32] Çilingiroğlu and Salvini 2001; Işıklı 2018; Işıklı *et al*. 2019; etc.
[33] Burney 1957; Burney and Lawson 1960.
[34] Deschamps *et al*. 2011; 2012; 2019; etc.
[35] Çavuşoğlu *et al*. 2018; 2019; etc.
[36] Karaosmanoğlu and Yılmaz 2015; 2019; etc.
[37] Konyar *et al*. 2018; 2019; etc.

Fig. 14. One of the blocks of the ‘pillared hall’ at Adilcevaz Kefkalesi (after Salvini 2012(3), 364, A 12-10).

Fig. 15. The ‘empty chariot’ of the god Haldi, Adilcevaz Kefkalesi (after Sevin 2005, 71).

Fig. 16. General view of Ayanis (after Çilingiroğlu 2012, fig. 1).

Fig. 17. The southern fortification wall of Ayanis
(after Çilingiroğlu and Işıklı 2014, res. 8)

Fig. 18. The interior of the *susi* temple of Ayanis (after Çilingiroğlu 2012, fig. 7).

Problems in Urartian Studies

In contrast to the great progress in studying and understanding Urartian culture, many questions remain unanswered overall and with uncertain prospects of resolution within the current state of our knowledge. It is impossible here to address all such aspects. I have highlighted only some, for example, concerning the ethno-political or social history of the Urartian state.

The Roots of Urartu

It is possible to draw a general outline for the history of Urartu in its formation period, starting from the first attestations of this toponym in the Middle Assyrian period, and more frequent mentions in the texts of the early Neo-Assyrian kings. Along with this, the roots of the kingdom and the origins of the architects of this unique culture are a matter of dispute. It is evident that a completely new mindset emerged around Lake Van: the introduction of an administrative system of governance, new ways of organising the society and economy, such as the extensive storage facilities and mass production of standardised wares in state workshops, large-scale capture and use of prisoners of war as the main

labour force, a new outlook in civilian, cultic and military architecture, the use of the cuneiform script, etc. The Early Iron Age archaeology of the Van basin, at least in its current state, does not provide sufficient information to enable us to consider the local communities as the creators of such developments.[38] If this is the case, then it will become clear that we are dealing with the penetration of a completely new culture.[39] As we believe, this culture had Syro-Mesopotamian (Assyro-Mitannian) roots and goes back to the 2nd millennium BC.[40] Another question is how and where the traditions of the 2nd millennium BC could survive after the disintegration of the Middle Assyrian kingdom, to be transferred and borrowed by the ones we call 'Urartians'. I have tried to answer to those questions in a study, which we hope to present to the reader very soon.

Some Chronological Issues

It is well known that the chronology of the Urartian kings is based mainly on Neo-Assyrian sources that mention the names of nine such rulers. Only four of them can be identified with certainty. These are Ishpuini son of Sarduri, Argishti son of Minua, Sarduri son of Argishti and Argishti son of Rusa. In all other cases it remains uncertain which kings the Assyrian sources meant. Uncertainty grows when we deal with the names Rusa and Sarduri, the most common dynastic names used repeatedly by the members of the ruling house. Moreover, we have no coherent information about the lengths of the reigns of almost all Urartian kings, and the traditional dating supposed by Melikishvili in the 1950s, widely accepted in the scholarly literature, must be considered as hypothetical and should be used with caution. The same also concerns Argishti and his son Sarduri, the two most powerful kings of Urartu. Their regnal years, figuring in various studies with certainty, have been disputed in two recent studies, with the proposed dates varying by over a decade.[41]

The order of succession of Urartian kings suggested by Piotrovsky[42] has long been predominant in Urartian studies, especially in the Soviet period. This, in its turn, was based on the chronological order suggested by Lehmann-Haupt, differing from the latter only in the sequence of the first kings. Later, based on the new evidence obtained from the written materials found at

[38] Baştürk 2015, 6–8.
[39] For example, Köroğlu 2011, 24–25; Reade 2019; Grekyan 2019.
[40] Grekyan 2016.
[41] *Cf.*, for example, Fuchs 2012; Grekyan 2015.
[42] Piotrovsky 1959, 41–42.

Karmir-Blur, it was suggested that the list of kings be completed with two new names. Thus the number of names in the list has reached 14.

In fact, the order of succession of Urartian rulers is also unclear, especially when we consider the kings who ruled in the late 8th–7th centuries BC. For example, the order of succession of the three kings with the dynastic name Rusa, son of Sarduri, son of Erimena and son of Argishti, is still a matter of debate.[43] Sarduri son of Sarduri, another Urartian king, could actually have been a ruler of the late 8th century BC, though he is usually considered one of the last kings of the late 7th century BC.[44] There is scarce information allowing us to suppose the existence of more kings, like Inushpua son of Minua. The latter in all probability should have succeeded his father on the Urartian throne, but this did not take place for unknown reasons, or his reign ended soon after his enthronement (Table 1).[45]

These are just a few examples and the list of problems in Urartian chronology can surely be expanded.

Problems Concerning the Socio-economic History of Urartu

The sources from the Urartian period that can be helpful for understanding the economic structure of the state or the social order and lifestyle of its people are in fact insignificant and incomparable with the information we have in the case of many other ancient Near Eastern cultures. Here the main question is whether the available data can shed light on the nature of socio-economic relationships in Urartu. What forms of landowning existed in Urartu? Was there a stratum of individual landowners/landlords, or did the land belonged to the state/palace as the supreme owner which granted only temporary landowning in exchange for state service (military, administrative or other)? Should Urartu be regarded as a 'slave-holding' state, as it was classified by Soviet Marxist historical science, or are we dealing with a 'feudal' state with a class of serfs or dependents set on state-owned lands, a lower strata of the society whose status Diakonoff compared with that of the 'helots' of ancient Sparta?[46] Are there any grounds to speak about pricing and the existence of free market relations in general? Is it just coincidence that the Urartian preserved archives contain no traces of private business interactions like selling or credit contracts? Perhaps the Urartian economy restricted economic relations between

[43] For example, Seidl 2012; Kroll 2012; Roaf 2012; Salvini 2012, 133–34; etc.
[44] Kroll 1984.
[45] Sevin 1981, 3.
[46] Diakonoff 1973.

Assyrian kings		Assyrian sources: attestation dates and names		Urartian sources: names of the kings
Shalmaneser III	858–824 BC	858, 856, 844 BC	Ar(r)amu, the Urartian	–
		832 BC	Se'-duri, the Urartian	**Sarduri son of Lutipri** (?)
Shamshi-Adad V	824–811 BC	821/818 BC	Ushpina	**Ishpuini son of Sarduri/Issarduri**
		–	Issarduri, son of Ishpueni (?)	Sarduri son of Ishpuini (?)
		–	–	**Minua son of Ishpuini**
		–	–	Inushpua son of Minua (?)
Shalmaneser IV	781–772 BC	780 BC	Argish/sti, the Urartian	**Argishti son of Minua**
Tiglath-pileser III	744–727 BC	743, 735 BC	Issarduri/Sard(a)uri, the Urartian	**Sarduri son of Argishti**
		–	–	Erimena (?)
Sargon II	721–705 BC	719–714 BC	Ursa/Rusa, the Urartian	**Rusa son of Sarduri** (variant A)
				Rusa son of Erimena (variant B)
		715 BC (?)	Issarduri (?)	Sarduri son of Sarduri (?)
		715 BC	Melartua	–
		713 BC	Ursa	**Rusa son of Erimena** (variant A)
				Rusa son of Sarduri (variant B)
		708 BC	Argishti/Irgishti, the Urartian	**Argishti son of Rusa**
Esarhaddon	680–669 BC	673–672 BC	Ursa, the Urartian	**Rusa son of Argishti**
Ashurbanipal	669–630 BC	652 BC	Ursa, the Urartian	**Rusa son of Argishti** (variant A)
				Rusa son of Erimena (variant B)
				Rusa son of Rusa (variant C)
		643 BC	Issarduri, the Urartian	**Sarduri son of Rusa** (variant A)
				Sarduri son of Sarduri (variant B)

Urartian kings		Urartian sources: attestation dates and names		Names of the Assyrian kings
Sarduri son of Argishti	*ca.* 770–735 BC	754/753 BC	Ashurnirari son of Adadnirari	Ashur-nirari (V) son of Adad-nirari (III)

Table 1. Synchronous list of the Assyrian and Urartian kings (possible succession in bold).

different regions and peoples of the empire and hindered private business? Perhaps foreign trade was exclusively under control of the state? Are we not dealing with a highly centralised state economy based on redistribution, comparable with the 'palace/temple' economies of some Mesopotamian and Mediterranean states, like Eblaite or the Cretan economy of the Neopalatial period (Fig. 19)?[47] This list of questions can surely be extended. Notwithstanding the most recent publication on the socio-economic organisation of Urartu,[48] further and comprehensive studies are clearly needed to try to answer those questions.

Ethnic Structure

The ethnic character of the Urartian state and the problems of the ethnicity of the Urartians have so far been the most politicised field in Urartian studies. Who lived with the Urartians? Who were the Urartians themselves – natives or newcomers? Did the 'Urartians' ever exist, or is this an artificial term, which, according to some, is used to distort the history and cut Urartu off from its original roots? Unfortunately this attitude is particularly common in our region, full of historical-political problems and unsettled conflicts, while the real problems in Urartian studies are often pushed into the background.

Yes, the origin of the Urartians is still in doubt, albeit that we know more than enough about the Urartian language. At the same time it is possible, and some arguments even hint at this, that the ruling house could have had a different ethnic origin. In the meantime, the names of the Urartian kings are etymologised differently, generally regarded as having Indo-European (Phrygian or any related language) roots.[49] But we should not forget that we are dealing with dynastic names. The personal names of some kings were also known, like Uedipri (the name of Rusa son of Sarduri) which seemingly points to the Hurro-Urartian lingual world.

The study of Urartian prosopography, which is still in progress, could help to reveal the ethno-linguistic character of the empire.[50] In the meantime, the existing data already outline an interesting picture, as, for example, certain rules in the name formations, common roots attested in different names, etc., indicating that the bearers of those names could represent the same lingual world. Naturally, we should also take into account that the personal names

[47] For example, Hiller 1988; Christakis 2011; etc.
[48] Çifçi 2017.
[49] Petrosyan 2019.
[50] A study on Urartian prosopography is currently in preparation by the author.

Fig. 19. Karmir-Blur, the wine cellar 'hall no. 28' after excavations (after Piotrovsky 1970, fig. 11).

attested in the Urartian texts are mainly those of members of the upper strata, represent the ruling elite, whose representatives would logically hold high positions in state administration and in the army, thus figuring in royal letters or in administrative records more often than the others.

Surely, the large-scale deportations and planned resettlements, along with ethnic migrations, should have had a major impact on the ethno-linguistic

picture of the empire. It is beyond doubt that the number of resettled population groups and prisoners of war numbering hundreds of thousands of people would be quite enough to change the ethno-linguistic situation of the land and gradually cause the extinction of the Urartian language, especially after the collapse of the state. At present, we can state that the available material proves the multi-ethnic character of Urartu.

The End of Urartu and its Aftermath

As we see, the history of Urartu is full of questions, and the available data is insufficient even for accurately representing the chronological order of the Urartian kings. Another important issue concerns the fall of Urartu.

From the dawn of Urartian studies, the main interpretation circulated in publications was that the kingdom of Urartu, which had fallen into decline during the second half of the 7th century BC, continued in existence until the 590s or 580s BC. The kingdom collapsed under the attacks of the Median empire, before the beginning of the war between Media and Lydia or shortly after its conclusion, when the Halys river (now the Kızılırmak) in Central Anatolia was recognised as the border between these powers. Accordingly, the lands lying east of that line, including Urartu, should already have been included into the borders of Media as dependent kingdoms or provinces. Even in recent studies one occasionally finds reference to this scenario,[51] while modern scholarship largely doubts the existence of the Median empire.[52]

Opinions about decline and fall of the Urartian kingdom differ.[53] The most common standpoints are:

a) The kingdom of Urartu ceased to exist at some point in the second half of the 7th century BC. Accordingly, the name of Urartu mentioned a few times in one of the Babylonian chronicles (Urashtu) and in the Old Testament (Ararat), connected with the events dated to the turn of the 6th century BC, was a geographical designation of some northern territories, rather than a name of a considerable political unit.[54]
b) Urartu had fallen by force of arms, either under the attacks of Scythian and Median invaders or as a result of civil war.[55] This does not exclude

[51] For example, Donmez 2016, 15, 143, etc.
[52] For discussion of problematic issues of the history of Media, see, for instance, the contributions presented at the conference in Padua in 2001: Lanfranchi *et al*. 2003; etc.
[53] In detail, see Hellwag 2012.
[54] Kroll 1984.
[55] For example, Piotrovsky 1959, 116, 256; Kleiss 1989, 217.

the rebellion of subject peoples against royal power resulting in the further weakening of the kingdom and its fall shortly thereafter.[56]

c) The fall of Urartu was caused by natural disaster. In particular, a wave of several earthquakes resulted in the destruction of its important royal centres, leading to rebellions, political and economic crisis and chaos, from which it was not possible to recover.[57]

The two last points are in fact conditioned by a simple query: why did Urartu, which seemingly was on a rapid upsurge in the first half of the 7th century BC, under the rule of Rusa son of Argishti, whose reign is often called a period of 'Reconstruction' in Urartian studies for the unprecedented city-building projects he implemented,[58] fall into sudden decline after Rusa, or even during his reign, securing no more than one to two generations of life for the cities he founded. The processes observed in those cities in the later periods of their existence indisputably speak about a deep crisis in the kingdom.[59]

The possible role of climate change in the fall of Urartu is another attempt to respond to the questions formulated above.[60]

Despite the fact that the role of environmental factors has not been dismissed in Urartian studies, the impact of climate changes on the local communities remains open. Climatic changes, especially long-lasting droughts and water shortages, would have had serious, if not fatal consequences for any agricultural state, as was Urartu. The history of the ancient Near East has repeatedly witnessed the disastrous effects of climatic change. The fall of the kingdom of Akkad in around 2200 BC (the abrupt mega-drought or the so-called 4.2–3.9 ka BP event)[61] or the collapse of the Hittite empire in the 12th century BC after the ancient Near Eastern crisis[62] are only two examples among many.

Periods of drought occur quite frequently in the region. For example, the catastrophic shortage of water in the very dry summer of 2007 caused serious problems for the population and authorities of major cities in Turkey.[63] Photographs and reports of dried-up rivers and empty reservoirs in the mass media are a vivid illustration of the scale of this crisis. The situation was extremely severe, especially in Ankara, forcing the municipal authorities to establish strict restrictions on the use of water. Here one can recall the words of İbrahim

[56] Zimansky 2005, 239.
[57] Çilingiroğlu 2002; Batmaz 2018.
[58] For example, Smith 2003, 158.
[59] Grekyan 2009.
[60] Grekyan 2014.
[61] H. Weiss 2015; 2017.
[62] See, for example, B. Weiss 1982; Kaniewski *et al*. 2010, 211–14.
[63] For example, Simsek and Cakmak 2010.

Melih Gökçek, the mayor of Ankara: 'Drought had suddenly hit the world. We never expected God to allow such a disaster… If God wills it, rain could start to fall immediately.'[64] At the same time, the Papal nuncio in Turkey, Mgr Antonio Lucibello, was on a different mission, imploring God for rain….[65] If a researcher carefully examines the Urartian and Assyrian contemporary written sources, he will find much in common between those texts and the words of the mayor or the prayers of the nuncio.

Years of severe droughts, failure of crops, famine and hunger are attested in the ancient Near East for the 7th century BC.[66] The unprecedented large-scale hydraulic projects realised in Assyria by the kings Sennacherib, Esarhaddon and Assurbanipal in the first half of the 7th century BC are quite comparable with the hydraulic works of the contemporary Urartian kings, Argishti son of Rusa and Rusa son of Argishti: construction of 'lakes', i.e. reservoirs and new canals stretching several hundred kilometres. It should not be considered accidental that we encounter such disparate efforts to gain access to additional water resources in these neighbouring kingdoms in the same period. To explain this phenomenon through factors other than in response to the challenges of nature is quite difficult and seems unrealistic.

The further developments outlined by archaeological work carried out at the key Urartian sites depict obvious evidence of political instability, economic crisis and poor prospects of military success. We know the outcome: the capture and destruction of almost all the major Urartian administrative centres and the almost total depopulation of the main agricultural regions administrated by them (Fig. 20).[67] The invasions of nomadic northerners such as the Cimmerians or the Scythians, or the probable uprisings of the subject peoples were merely results of the crisis. The situation in Urartu is similarly repeated in the neighbouring Assyria, resulting in general depopulations of its main agricultural regions and destruction or abandonment of its royal cities and provincial capitals.[68] Consequently, having lost the majority of its population, the Assyrian heartland turned into a periphery of the Neo-Babylonian kingdom.[69]

The image of the ensuing post-Urartian period is not fully clear. Many scholars are restricted to naming the powers that dominated for certain periods

[64] See *https://uk.reuters.com/article/oukoe-uk-turkey-water-ankara-idUKL0330107320070803* (consulted 27 May 2019).

[65] See *https://www.economist.com/europe/2007/08/16/praying-for-water* (consulted 27 May 2019).

[66] Schneider and Adalı 2014; 2016.

[67] Grekyan 2014, 73–75.

[68] Bunnens 1997, 28; MacGinnis and Matney 2009, 14–15; MacGinnis 2018, 280–82.

[69] For example, Frahm 2017, 193–94.

Fig. 20. The mud-brick walls of Karmir-Blur turned into dark red after the fire. Hence the name of the site (Arm. 'Red hill') (after Piotrovsky 1969, fig. 30).

the former territories of Urartu, including, above all, the Median and Achaemenid empires. Meanwhile, as noted above, the existence of the Median empire is highly doubtful. Although we have such an important source for the Achaemenid period as the *Anabasis* of Xenophon, the archaeological aspects of that period are still poorly investigated,[70] and the issues of continuation of the Urartian material culture and its inheritance by the post-Urartian societies still needs further investigation (Fig. 21).[71]

It is certain that some elements of Urartian culture survived and this is especially evident in the pottery tradition. These relate to the emergence of 'Urartian' pottery in the sense that was accepted in Armenian archaeology, i.e. as the hybrid forms of 'Biainian' ('palatial') and the 'Etiunian' (local) forms (Fig. 22).[72] The distribution of 'Urartian' pottery and the emergence of

[70] For recent studies, see Khatchadourian 2013; 2016; Dan 2015; Herles 2017; etc.
[71] Tiratsyan 1978; 1988; Tiratsyan and Areshian 1990; Sevin 2012; Areshian 2019.
[72] Avetisyan and Bobokhyan 2012.

Fig. 21. Double-used Urartian bronze artefact (after Seidl 2004, Taf. 71).

Fig. 22. Two ‘local Urartian’ vessels
(after Avetisyan and Bobokhyan 2012, colour pl. 7.3, 6).

mountain fortresses built according to rules of Urartian military architecture and clearly dated to the post-Urartian period (Fig. 23)[73] may well suggest where one should look for the ‘last Urartians’.

Fig. 23. The fortress of Gelenge (after Özfırat 2014, fig. 32).

[73] Özfırat 2011, 24–25; 2012, 158–59.

Prospects in Urartian Studies

What are the prospect of Urartian studies? It is obvious that the Urartian cuneiform sources, which are complemented by new inscriptions from time to time and can even provoke new discussions, as happened after the discovery of two inscribed steles of Rusa son of Erimena (those of Gövelek and Savacık),[74] generally can no longer serve as a stimulus for future progress. They can serve only as a background for new studies at best, to be carried out in the future. Of course, we can expect to find Urartian archives of significant size, written on clay materials like tablets or bullae, but for now this prospect seems too vague, if not almost hopeless. This is the only area where one may dream to be wrong. Along with this, works written at the level of narrative description or the mechanical splicing together of written and archaeological data can be justified only if they are directed at the general public.

Is it possible to do more? Certainly. This does not concern only archaeology and the extension of archaeological work, which is always desirable. Eventually, the excavation of Kayalıdere, one of the promising sites of the Urartian kingdom restricted to the work of just one field season in 1965 (Fig. 24),[75] can be resumed, if there is more political will, rather than a well-formed scientific project.

The use of modern technology can play an extremely important role in studying Urartian archaeological material, and the first steps are already visible.[76] Besides, as far as we know, there is no comprehensive study on palaeoclimatology of Urartu, and a few studies based on the pollen, charcoal, isotopic and geochemical records of Lake Van cannot give us a complete picture.[77] If we have this information, the data of the written sources and archaeology may appear in a completely different light. Dendrochronological data from Urartian sites are also limited, while there is still a chance to complete them.[78] The same is true for palaeobotany.[79] To summarise, there is a necessity to investigate thoroughly the natural environment in which the Urartian kingdom passed its way. Such a study, I am profoundly convinced, can answer many questions.

[74] *CTU* I, A 14-1, A 14-2.
[75] Burney 1966.
[76] For example, Speakman *et al*. 2004; Batmaz *et al*. 2019.
[77] Lamcke and Sturm 1997; Wick *et al*. 2003.
[78] Newton and Kuniholm 2007, 197.
[79] For example, Oybak Dönmez and Belli 2007; Solmaz and Oybak Dönmez 2013.

Fig. 24. 1965 excavations in Kayalidere, Upper Citadel (after Burney 1966, pl. 2b).

Opinions about the nature of the Urartian state, its system of governance, organisation of society and socio-economic relations, etc. may differ, but the studies of these spheres are insufficient, most already outdated, and the need for further, up-to-date investigations is high. The ancient Near Eastern parallels can serve as a benchmark.

What I have said concerns the possibilities provided by factual material. There is also a second side to the problem: the lack of co-operation in Urartian studies, or the loose relations between the academic institutions of the countries of the region, conditioned by regional conflicts and a set of political and historical problems. Of course, academic publications and the quick dissemination of research results in the modern technological world partly counteract this problem, but in any case it is evident that nothing can replace a direct conversation between two scientists.

This introduction presents just part of the palette of Urartian studies, past and present. The contributions to the present volume show where Urartian studies stand currently. I believe that there is a real hope of seeing in the future joint international projects, more complete studies and joint research, combining different viewpoints, and written in mutual understanding.

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AN OVERVIEW OF URARTIAN STUDIES: THE PHILOLOGICAL RECOVERY AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXPLORATION OF URARTU

Paul ZIMANSKY

Abstract

The rediscovery of Urartu began almost by accident in the early 19th century AD and was initially focused on inscriptions found near Van. Initial attempts at excavations were inept and the field advanced largely through philology until the mid-20th century. Initially spurred by Soviet research in the 1950s, recent decades have seen a dramatic expansion of the horizons investigation, with major excavations and archaeological surveys in Turkey, Armenia and Iran. In the 21st century, the field continues to advance with more practitioners than at any time in the past. Summaries and overviews have consolidated the gains of the past, and highlighted unresolved problems to be addressed by future archaeology.

A FORGOTTEN REALM

Despite nearly two centuries of modern scholarship, the study of Urartu remains one of the more arcane disciplines in archaeology and ancient history. The number of individuals currently making contributions toward the understanding of the Urartian language may be counted on the fingers of one hand. Archaeologists who have excavated Urartian sites or written on aspects of Urartian material culture are somewhat more numerous, particularly in countries were Urartian sites are to be found, but still constitute only a small tribe. Two conferences bringing together most the of the specialists in Urartian archaeology and philology, held in Munich (2007)[1] and Yerevan[2] respectively, were easily accommodated in a single room, their participants numbering fewer than 30 in each case. Moreover, scholarly efforts have been scattered among a great variety of publications printed in different modern languages. Some years ago, a bibliography that sought to be comprehensive for all material ever published on Urartu included entries for 1432 books and articles written in Turkish, German, Russian, Armenian, English, French and Italian by roughly

[1] Kroll *et al*. 2012.
[2] Kosyan *et al*. 2010.

500 individuals.[3] While the pace of publication, if not the number of languages represented, has accelerated since that summation was published, the community of scholars who have worked on Urartu remains small and scattered. Beyond this and outside the groves of academe, historical awareness of what was once one of the most powerful and prosperous empires of the ancient Near East remains almost non-existent.

It would be wrong, however, to minimise the collective intellectual achievements of these dispersed individual researchers. The rediscovery started from almost nothing. At the beginning of the 19th century, no artefacts or archaeological monuments were associated with Urartu, no word of its language survived, no memory of any of its rulers was preserved in story or legend, and even the name of the kingdom was unknown. Today we have a reasonable grasp of when and where Urartu flourished, what its art looked like, and how its language was articulated. This has been established through a prolonged scholarly process rather than dramatic discoveries. Admittedly, much of the progress in the quest has come about indirectly, through improved methods and capacities in the two interacting fields through which it has been pursued, philology and archaeology. It was only after these had been honed on other civilisations and regions that they were profitably applied to Urartu. Nevertheless, their cumulative effect has been to bring Urartu into sharp focus as a rich and dynamic academic subject, which continues to advance today, despite remaining a somewhat off the beaten path even within the fields of Assyriology and ancient Near Eastern history.

Why did such an important actor in the Iron Age world come to be so thoroughly forgotten in the first place? One answer appears to lie in the violence and thoroughness of its destruction. Urartu's fall from the height its political power and cultural sophistication into almost total historical obscurity was rapid, playing out in less than a century and perhaps in only a few decades. The date and historical circumstances under which the government of the erstwhile coherent state disintegrated are mysterious, although the evidence of conflagration at the most important citadels strongly suggests a violent demise. The last native inscriptions[4] documenting royal actions date to the mid-7th century BC, and the last external reference to a specific Urartian king is

[3] Zimansky 1998.

[4] In this volume Urartian texts are cited in accordance with Mirjo Salvini's *Corpus dei Testi Urartei* (*CTU*) Inscriptions on stone, published in the first three volumes (Salvini 2008) are in series A, followed by a number that gives the order in a sequence of kings, followed by another number to specify the text. Thus *CTU* A 5-76 is a stele found at Karahan, composed in the name of Minua. Inscriptions on metal (B), clay (C), other materials (D) and seal impressions (E) are in the fourth volume.

provided by Assurbanipal, who condescendingly notes that an Ishtar-duri (i.e. Sarduri) of Urartu sent gifts in fear and submission to him. This payment of tribute, if such it was, must have been made between 645 and 642 BC,[5] and the Sarduri in question seems to have left no inscriptions of his own.[6] When the Assyrian empire itself ceased to exist, the primary literate culture that had been in contact with Urartu also disappeared.

Urartu's shallow roots were another factor that helped make it ephemeral. Much of what we regard as Urartian culture was in fact the creation of a very small number of elites who controlled the political and military apparatus of the state. There is no reason to believe that the Urartian language, religion and material culture, which had been imposed on the area as the kingdom extended through conquest, penetrated very deeply into the society as a whole. When the state disappeared, so did most of these elements.[7] The great citadels, in which archaeologists now find the most impressive bronzes and architectural remains, lost their strategic significance. Most were not re-occupied after the looters and squatters wandered off.

Afterwards, there is little to suggest that anyone in the ancient world knew that Urartu was or ever had been an important state. The Biblical book of *Jeremiah* (51:27) prophesies that the kingdoms of *'rrt*, the Manneans, and the Scythians would destroy Babylon, and although *'rrt* clearly refers to Urartu, the chronological validity of this reference, ostensibly dating to 594 BC, is dubious. The three kingdoms in question were enemies of Assyria rather than Babylon, so they appear to be pasted into Jermiah's text from an invective of an earlier era.[8] In Neo-Babylonian texts, Urartu, now called *Urashtu*, is a land, not a polity. Some individuals, active in Mesopotamia, are designated as being from it, but otherwise they have no distinguishing characteristics. One of the last references to Urartu – again as a geographical term in the variant *Urashtu* – can be found in the Akkadian version of Darius I's Behistun inscription, but even there it has been supplanted in the Old Persian text of the trilingual by the term '*Armena*' (i.e. Armenia). While ancient interpreters of the Hebrew Bible eventually vocalised *'rrt* as Ararat, 'Armenia' was used as a synonym in some of the Septuagint and Vulgate Bible references, where the mountains of Armenia, rather than Urartu/Ararat, are given as the landing place of Noah's ark.

[5] Fuchs 2012, 138.

[6] An inscription on a shield authored by one Sarduri son of Sarduri may be the sole native relic of this king (*CTU* B 16-1; Seidl 2004, 43), but it is by no means certain that this is the Sarduri mentioned by Assurbanipal.

[7] Zimansky 2001, 19–20.

[8] Marincović 2012, 224.

One other blow that consigned Urartu to historical oblivion was the failure of ancient Greek writers to take note of it. The historians who were closest in time and interested in the area – Herodotus,[9] Xenophon and Ctesias – ignored it entirely. Strabo saw no farther back than the Medes and Armenians, and almost all of the detail he provides on the area pertains to the Hellenistic period. This did not prevent Greek traditions from having an influence on the interpretation of Urartian ruins, but it did insure that they did so in a very indirect and misleading way. The few curious individuals who sought to explain the physical remains at Van looked to what the Greeks presented as Mesopotamian tradition. These included the early Armenian historian Moses Khorenatsi, who attributed the cuneiform writing on the Van Citadel to the legendary queen Semiramis. He was essentially adapting Greek legendary accounts to the local environment. The stories of Ninus and Semiramis which he recounted were derived from Diodorus Siculus. He, in turn, was summarising Ctesias, who made up these stories of Assyrian and Median history out of whole cloth.[10] None of these Greek sources knew the first thing about Urartu. The writings of Khorenatsi demonstrate that even in Van itself, where Urartian monuments stood in plain sight, the break in historical continuity was so complete that no memory of Urartu survived in the 1st millennium AD. His history was, however, what ultimately drew European attention to Van and stimulated the rediscovery of the kingdom in the 19th century.

The First Philology

The hope of finding remains of a mythical Mesopotamian queen as remembered by Greeks and transplanted by Armenians was not, by itself, enough to lure orientalists to eastern Anatolia. The European rediscovery of Urartu came about as an afterthought in a larger search for ancient Near Eastern texts. In the intellectual climate of the early 1820s, when Jean-François Champollion's *Lettre à M. Dacier* offered a preliminary solution to reading Egyptian hieroglyphs and Georg Friedrich Grotefend's work on the Old Persian script began to find an audience, there was a demand for epigraphic research in lands of the eastern Ottoman empire and Persia. Antoine-Jean Saint-Martin, a friend of Champollion, pioneer in Armenian Studies, and editor of the *Journal Asiatique*,

[9] Perhaps if Herodotus had written his promised Assyrian *logoi* (1. 184) some conception of Urartu might have been incorporated into classical traditions, as, for example, the Scythians were, but no ancient source suggests that he ever did.

[10] Drews 1973, 109.

recruited a young professor from the University of Giessen, Friedrich Eduard Schulz, to travel to Iran on a mission sponsored by the French Minister of Foreign Affairs. Its primary object was to copy Zoroastrian manuscripts at such sites as Yazd and Kerman.[11] Schulz set out in the summer of 1826, but was prevented from entering Iran by the outbreak of a war between Russia and Persia. This was to continue until 1828 and result in Persia giving up its claims to the Yerevan and Nakhchivan areas. Consequently, after a delay in Constantinople, Schulz turned his attention to a secondary project which Saint-Martin had suggested to him: copying the inscriptions of Semiramis at Van. His first efforts included the annals of Argishti I, two blocks of the Sardursburg (Madırbuluç) Akkadian text of Sarduri I, the Meher Kapısı inscription and the trilingual inscription of Xerxes on the south face of the Van Citadel. Ultimately he copied 42 inscriptions, and completed a short memoire on his efforts in Van.[12]

Schulz had few guideposts to help him understand what he was copying. He recognised the attributions to Semiramis could not all be taken seriously and was able to read the name Xerxes in the Achaemenid trilingual. He discerned that there were subtle differences in the sign forms between inscriptions, and seems to have understood that the Sardursburg inscription was in a different language than most of the other texts he copied. The quality of the workmanship impressed him and, and he was concerned that no statuary could be found illuminate the civilisation that had flourished here.[13] Archaeology as a field did not exist at this time, and he can hardly have been expected to have recognised Urartian sites that were more subtle than the Van Citadel. In that regard his somewhat naive but not incorrect remarks on Toprakkale, which he visited, are of interest:

> La tradition du pays place sur le sommet du Zemzem un ancien château dont je n'ai pu découvrir aucune trace. Cependant la grande quantité de fragments de tuiles et de poteries que l'on trouve accumulés sur la colline et dans les fentes de ses rochers rend assez vraisemblable qu'il y a eu autrefois quelque bâtiment.[14]

Schulz returned to Constantinople for the winter of 1826–27 and sent his memoire, along with the text copies to Europe. In the following summer, he returned to eastern Anatolia, and sought out other inscriptions, including the most important of the bilingual texts, the stele of Kelishin.[15] This was dangerous work in the political climate of the time, and Schulz was murdered

[11] Saint-Martin 1828, 161–63.
[12] Schulz 1840.
[13] Schulz 1840, 297.
[14] Schulz 1840, 308.
[15] Wartke 1993, 12.

by a Kurdish chieftain on the suspicion that he was a spy. His later epigraphic work was never recovered, and more than half a century was to pass before the key texts of Kelishin Stele were to find their way to the light of publication through the work of others.

Schulz's efforts, however, were to have significant consequences, not just for the study of Urartu, but for the decipherment of the cuneiform writing system generally. When his texts were finally published[16] they offered reasonably accurate copies of a substantial amount of material for desk-bound scholars to work with. This was just before Paul-Émile Botta and Austen Layard began excavating the great capitals of Assyria, so there were few other groups of cuneiform records available for study. In some ways, Urartian texts are quite transparent, although the language behind them was a complete mystery at the time. The Urartian lapidary script is very clear, and makes use of a comparatively small number of signs. There was thus no problem in defining and distinguishing the basic elements of the writing. The standard cuneiform signs, which were used to write at least nine different languages before the system disappeared in the 1st century AD, can relate to the spoken word in three basic ways. A sign may be a logogram, that is to say stand for a whole word. In this case, it has a common meaning in other languages written in cuneiform, but gives no clue to the pronunciation. For example, the sign for 'house' or 'building' would be pronounced *e* in Sumerian, *parna* in Hittite and *bīt* in Akkadian. We do not know how it would be pronounced in Urartian, but know what the sign means. A cuneiform character may also represent a syllable, either a pure vowel or a consonant-vowel combination of some sort. These give no indication of meaning, but their pronunciation is apt to be the same in various languages written in cuneiform, rather like many letters of the Latin alphabet share common values in Turkish, German, English and Italian. A few signs are also used to classify the type of word with which they are associated, for example to specify that it is the name of a land or city. These determinatives, as they are called, are purely graphic devices having nothing to do with what was spoken. All in all, cuneiform has about 600 different signs, most of which were used in more than one of these ways and with more than one syllabic value.

The cuneiform that was discovered in quantity in the late 1840s and early 1850s at the erstwhile capitals of Assyria – Nineveh, Nimrud and Khorsabad – was varied in its content and complicated in the way it rendered the Akkadian language. Assyrian scribes engaged a tradition of writing that went back millennia in which every sign had multiple potential readings. While Urartian scribes writing their own language used essentially the same system, they

[16] Schulz 1840.

simplified it considerably. They made frequent use of a few simple determinatives and common logograms, giving one an idea of what a text is about even while the language itself remained obscure. Their syllabic writing was also very economical and consistent, with the pronunciation of words being rendered by fewer that one hundred signs in common use. In terms of subject matter, the texts are highly repetitive, with only minor variants, and where they do vary, the small divergences are actually quite helpful to the interpreter. It took relatively little effort, for example, to see where the king's name was in a short dedicatory inscription, and to identify his patronymic by comparing to an identical text written by his father.

The scholar who made the best use of the texts Schulz copied was Edward Hincks. In one dramatic leap, he was able to understand the value of the common signs for vowels, and read many of the more complex syllabic signs by analysing their context in place names.[17] He did this in attempting to decipher the cuneiform writing system generally, but Urartian provided him the material for his initial breakthrough. Not surprisingly, many of his suggestions were wrong in this very early attempt at figuring out how the cuneiform system worked, but an impressive number of them were correct. He was able, for example, to work out that the sign recognised as a symbolic representation for a star was a determinative for the name of a god,[18] but he stumbled over the name for Urartu's chief god, Haldi, reading it as 'nabi' and assuming it was a general term for 'god'.[19] He puzzled over the structure and relationships of the Urartian language, which were completely unknown at the time. Seeing logograms for royal titles common to both the Van texts and what was coming out of Assyria, he suggested 'The dynasty that reigned in this country was, I suppose, of Assyrian origin and used Assyrian titles, which were introduced in their original form into inscriptions, which were otherwise in the vernacular dialect, which totally differed from the Assyrian.'[20] He correctly recognised that the language was inflected, but, misled by what he thought was a nominative case ending *-s* and an accusative in *-n*, erroneously concluded that the language was Indo-European. His paper (to which a supplement was appended) ends with a statement that justly claims an advance in understanding the script while simultaneously revealing a clouded view of Urartu:

> I flatter myself … that those who read this paper will admit that I have made a beginning, and gone a considerable way, in the decipherment and interpretation of a set of inscriptions, which, however slight may be their value in a historical

[17] Hincks 1848.
[18] Hincks 1848, 402.
[19] Hincks 1848, 412–13.
[20] Hincks 1848, 404.

> point of view, are invaluable to the philologer, as being beyond all comparison the oldest specimens of the Asiatic branch of the Indo-Germanic family;—nay, for aught that we know to the contrary, they are more ancient than any Greek which has come down to us.[21]

If Hincks was quite wrong in his historical/linguistic conclusions about Urartian, the methods he applied to the Van texts were a major step toward understanding how the cuneiform writing system worked. This understanding, which progressed dramatically with work by Edward Hincks, Henry Rawlinson, Jules Oppert and others in the 1850s and 1860s, rebounded to open up the field of Urartian studies in two ways: first, by revealing Urartu's historical importance through the study of Assyrian historical records; and second, by permitting scholars to return the Urartian texts themselves with better tools for comprehending their content. As new inscriptions were published, including those written in the names of later monarchs and found farther away from Van, the dating and size of the kingdom gradually came to be recognised. By 1870, it could no longer be doubted that Urartu was an important adversary of the Assyrian empire.

The affiliation of the Urartian language remained an issue for the rest of the 19th century. Various scholars such as Andreas Mordtmann, Stanislas Giyard, Keropé Patkanov and Louis de Robert contradicted one another in their various offerings[22] some continuing to argue for an Indo-European affiliation and others looking to languages like Georgian for parallels. The real progress in the late 19th century, however, came as scholars explored the meanings of individual words and phrases on the basis of contextual evidence. The moment when the language could be said to have been 'deciphered' was a long way off, although this was hardly recognised at the time.

A milestone of sorts was reached in the 1880s when Archibald Sayce collected and published all the Urartian inscriptions known at the time in a book-length article in the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*.[23] This included transliterations, translations, a grammatical analysis, a sign list and glossary. He was to follow this with supplementary articles over the next three decades in the same format. At the beginning of this first contribution Sayce summarised and critiqued previous Urartian studies. He recognised the language was neither Semitic nor Indo-European, and noted its similarity to Georgian and other Caucasian languages, while admitting he did not have the expertise to

[21] Hincks 1848, 422.

[22] For an annotated list of much of the rather obscure scholarship of this period, see Zimansky 1998, 152–60.

[23] Sayce 1882.

go very far with this.[24] He understood that the Assyrian name for the kingdom was Urartu (as Urardhu) and speculated on its pantheon. Noting his achievement in his *Reminiscences* 40 years later, he was hardly modest:

> My memoire on the Decipherment of the Vannic cuneiform inscriptions of Ancient Armenia, published in the July and October (1882) numbers of the *Journal* of the Royal Asiatic Society brought congratulations and fresh material from Stanislas Guyard in Paris, Patkanoff in St Petersburg, and D.H. Müller in Vienna. The language, history and geography of oriental antiquity were at last cleared up and placed on a solid foundation. The enigma of the Vannic inscriptions had been solved.[25]

He was not alone in this opinion. As late as 1915 a work relating the history of what was still called 'Vannic', credited Sayce with solving the mystery of the inscriptions.[26] In the light of our current understanding of Urartian, this conclusion is risible. Allowing for some changes in conventions of recording, Sayce's readings of signs were almost modern and demonstrate how far the study of cuneiform had progressed since Hincks, but his translations show an imperfect grasp of the meaning of even the most basic texts. Sayce was nothing if not bold, translating virtually everything whether he was on solid ground or merely guessing. Because he did not correctly understand the morphology of case endings, he was confused about the god Haldi. He recognised Haldi as the head of the pantheon, but thought there were many lesser Haldis. A simple passage illustrates how far Sayce was from understanding Urartian: what we would now translate 'Under the aegis of Haldi, Minua son of Ishpuini built this *susi* [a type of temple] for Haldi, the lord' was rendered by Sayce as 'To the children of Khaldis the gracious, to Khaldis the lord, Menuas son of Ishpuinis, this wall has restored'.[27] These non-existent 'children of Haldi', incidentally, were later to cause much confusion, when some later scholars represented this as a name for the Urartians themselves. One should not be overly dismissive of Sayce's work, however. It made the Urartian texts widely available and gave an approximation of their content that was generally useful to the scholars of the day. The transliterations were accurate enough, and signs that Sayce was in doubt about were printed in a cuneiform type font that makes it possible to understand what was actually in the text. It was only in the 1950s that new publications replaced his work as a comprehensive collection of texts.

[24] Sayce 1882, 411.
[25] Sayce 1922, 212.
[26] Rogers 1915 I, 270–71.
[27] Sayce 1882, 508.

The First Archaeological Efforts

French and British excavations in the Neo-Assyrian capitals of northern Iraq were indirectly responsible for the initial archaeological contributions to the rediscovery of Urartu. In July 1850, Layard interrupted his second campaign of excavations in Assyria and, in a fever and 'half delusional', repaired to the cooler climate of the highlands to the north.[28] He spent a week in Van by which time he seems to have recovered his zeal, copying inscriptions and exploring the ruins of the Van Citadel. He was fully informed of the work of Hincks, including some advances made after the publication of the 1848 article, and had a clear idea that he was looking at the works of an important kingdom that was contemporary with the later Neo-Assyrian empire. He had a king list for the first Urartian monarchs that extended down to Sarduri II, whom we now know ruled in the mid-8th century. With the exception of reading Milidduri[s] for Sarduri, his names and their order are accurate. He was also correct in recognising that the Argishti recorded in an inscription of Sargon II of Assyria at Khorsabad provided both synchronism[29] and the name of the kingdom he ruled. Layard published the name Urartu in clear cuneiform signs, and although he misread it, was close enough to recognise it was the same as Biblical Ararat.[30] Unaware of the existence of Argishti II, he assumed the Khorsabad text referred to Argishti I, and thus his chronology was off by more than half a century, but his general understanding of Urartian history was a long leap forward from where Hincks had been only a few years before.

Layard's archaeological work at Van was minimal, but not uninformative. He drew a plan of the rock-cut tomb of Argishti I, recognising it for what it was, and noted that there were other royal tombs cut into the citadel rock at Van. With the assistance of the *mimar başı,* or chief architect, of Van, he attempted a modest excavation, making clear he was not the first person to think of doing this:

> I also found in the place a half-crazy Cawass, who had been all the way to Constantinople to obtain a firman for leave to dig for treasure beneath the inscribed tablets [rock-cut inscriptions]. The imperial document had been granted, with a clause, however, that a share of the riches discovered should be paid into the Sultan's treasury. His search had hitherto been in vain, although his purse had been emptied; but he knew all the old stones and inscriptions in the neighbourhood. With the aid of these two men I carried on excavations for a short time at

[28] Layard 1853, 365.
[29] Layard 1853, 403.
[30] Layard 1853, 365.

> the foot of the northern face of the rock, without results other than clearing away the earth from one to two half-buried tablets, and laying bare the artificially smoothed rock.[31]

Interestingly, Layard also gives us something of a preview of what was to be the key location for the earliest productive excavations in Urartu, Toprakkale. In his pursuit of inscriptions, Layard had gone to Meher Kapısı, a false door carved into a cliff outside Van where Schulz had already copied the celebrated list of sacrifices to Urartian deities. From there he looked eastward to the erstwhile fortress:

> In some places long flights of steps lead nowhere, but finish abruptly in the face of the perpendicular precipice; in others the cliff is scarped to a great height without any apparent object. A singular shaft, with stairs, leading into a cavern, is called Zimzim. It is difficult to account for the use and origin of these singular excavations; their height from the plain and their inaccessible position almost preclude the idea of their having been quarries.[32]

This now known to have been Rusahinili Qilbanikai, a royal citadel founded by an Urartian king who reigned after any Layard knew. The 'long flights of steps' are of course wall footings, and the shaft leading into a cavern is still one of the most important surviving features of the site. Layard, for all his experience, did not understand the rudiments of Urartian fortress architecture.

All in all, Layard's most immediate contribution to the study of Urartu was to bring a modicum of attention to the area through his best-selling publications on his work in Assyria. Three decades later, he was also indirectly responsible for the first significant archaeological excavations on an Urartian site, the same Toprakkale he had so misunderstood. After his second campaign in Assyria, from which the trip to Van had been a diversion, Layard left archaeology for a political career. The British Museum's appetite for Assyrian antiquities had not abated, so Hormuzd Rassam, an Iraqi Christian whom Layard had previously employed and sent to Oxford for education, was commissioned to continue the work in Assyria. He, too, was eventually drawn into British government service, which included a celebrated stint as a hostage in Ethiopia. In 1877, Rassam was made the British temporary Vice-Consul in Mosul and travelled to Van on diplomatic business. His later account of his travels notes his immediate interest in the site:

> There is an artificial mound near the Armenian Church of Dara Killisa, called 'Tooprac-Kalaa,' the Turkish for earthen castle, which shows an Assyrian origin. I visited the mound one day in company of Monsignor Yeramia, and as soon as

[31] Layard 1853, 392–93.
[32] Layard 1853, 400.

> I set my foot upon the top of it, I was possessed with a great longing to examine its contents; but unfortunately I had then no firman to enable me to gratify my desire. Although I asked the governor-general to open a few trenches in it, and promised that if I found any ancient remains I would let him have custody of them until the pleasure of the Porte was known, he was afraid to let me begin without imperial sanction.[33]

The problem with the excavation permit was soon solved. Layard, newly made ambassador to the Sublime Porte in Constantinople secured a *firman* that permitted Rassam to conduct excavations all over Mesopotamia.[34] This proved to be a major component of the embarrassing phase of Near Eastern archaeological research that Seton Lloyd has termed 'the scramble for antiquities' in which sites were essentially plundered for portable artefacts and few records were kept. The work at Toprakkale was a shambles, and only documented 70 years later, when Richard Barnett, working with letters sent to Layard by various parties, was able to piece together something of the progress of the work and rediscover the artefacts found in it.[35]

It is clear that artefacts were already coming out of the site before Rassam arrived. The British Museum had purchased a bronze figurine said to be from Van in 1874, and Rassam himself was negotiating with a local merchant for the purchase of bronzes that we now know came from Toprakkale.[36] Despite his enthusiasm, Rassam did not actually return to the site until 1880, and he delegated supervision of the work authorised by his wide-ranging permit to two local foreigners in residence, Captain Emilius Clayton, the British Vice-Consul and Dr George Raynolds, an American missionary. Clayton described the work of the first campaign, which lasted from March to May of 1880 in a letter to Layard, quoted in full by Barnett.[37] It is clear that they found a temple of the type that is designated *susi* in Urartian inscriptions, a square building with reinforced corners and massive walls surrounding a single-room cella. Along with this was a rich trove of artefacts, including shields inscribed in the name of Rusa, son of Erimena. Rassam appeared on the scene later in the summer, and 'forthwith took steps to resume the explorations on a large scale'.[38] These efforts lasted a month, causing much destruction to the mud-brick architecture which he failed to recognise. In one of the rare photographs in his later memoir, Rassam did show the fully exposed façade of the temple,[39]

[33] Rassam 1897, 130.
[34] Lloyd 1980, 149.
[35] Barnett 1950.
[36] Barnett 1950, 5–8.
[37] Barnett 1950, 9–12.
[38] Rassam 1897, 378.
[39] Rassam 1897, facing p. 376.

which has subsequently disappeared. Clayton did a little more digging in the next months, and then the project was given up. Apart from the discovery of the objects themselves, most of which languished in obscurity in the storerooms of the British Museum for decades, the expedition had been a fiasco. Raynolds later reported on objects that had been illicitly removed from Rassam's trenches, some of which wound up in scattered European collections.[40]

More careful exploration was carried on by a man who was to dominate Urartian studies in the first decades of 20th century, Carl Friedrich Lehmann-Haupt.[41] Originally trained in the law, he took degrees in Assyriology and ancient history in the 1880s and focused specifically on Urartu as he moved though academic positions in Germany, England, Constantinople and Austria. His initial experience with Urartian materials came through collaboration with Waldemar Belck, a scientist/engineer who worked for various industrial companies as an explorer in Africa and Asia. On a journey through the Caucasus and eastern Anatolia in 1891 Belck developed an avocational interest in Urartian inscriptions, many of which he recorded for the first time. On his return, he collaborated with Lehmann, presumably for the latter's expertise in cuneiform, in publishing his discoveries under sponsorship of Rudolf Vircow's Berliner Gesellschaft für Anthropologie, Ethnologie und Urgeschichte. In 1898 Belck and Lehmann undertook an expedition to eastern Anatolia, during which many more inscriptions were discovered and the excavations at Toprakkale re-opened. After their return to Germany, Belck and Lehmann had an acrimonious falling out over the publication rights of their discoveries. Although Belck was nominally the head of the expedition, his lack of scholarly credentials probably tipped the balance of the academic establishment against him, and he soon disappeared from the scene. Lehmann, as Lehmann-Haupt, became the dominant authority on Urartu for the next three decades.

The German excavations at Toprakkale discovered the foundations of the temple that Rassam had excavated and opened up new areas which were apparently dominated by storerooms. Although mud-brick walls were now recognised, contextual evidence for the finds was not presented in any detail. Lehmann-Haupt did make some of his finds available in the form of a monograph on Urartian material culture,[42] and further detailed his work in a lengthy

[40] Barnett 1950, 20–21.

[41] In 1905, Lehmann added the second part of the hyphenated name by which he is known to posterity. Later, an American scholar erroneously wrote that he did this in honour of his former teacher at the Johns Hopkins University, Paul Haupt. In fact it had to do with his marriage to Therese Haupt, who was unrelated to Paul.

[42] Lehmann-Haupt 1907.

travelogue subsequently published in two volumes.[43] Astonishingly, no architectural plans were published: the nearest approximation is a scale plan of the whole Van area, on which some of the key features are marked.[44] Today, much of the value of this work comes from its integration with more recent research, but at the time Lehmann-Haupt's offerings were closest thing to a study of Urartian material that could be found in print. As late as 1950, Barnett could write: 'The material from Toprak Kale is our only real source of information and reliable illustration of the art of ancient Urartu'.[45]

The fitful nature of research on Urartu in the 19th century may be illustrated by the slow recovery of important bilingual stele of Kelishin. This remains the longest bilingual text that we have, written in the names of kings Ishpuini and Minua at a very early stage in Urartu's history. It stood, until quite recently, in a high mountain pass near the modern watershed that marks the Iran/Iraq boundary, astride a difficult route connecting the plain south of Urmia with the valley of the Upper Zab and Rowanduz. It once marked the border between Urartu proper, and the state of Musasir, home of the primary shrine of Urartu's chief god, Haldi. The stele might well have served as a kind of Rosetta stone for Urartian decipherment in the 19th century had its publication not been long delayed. We have noted that it was apparently copied by Schulz, but his copy was lost. In October 1838, Rawlinson, who claimed to have heard stories about, found it covered in ice and could not make squeezes of it.[46] He thought it was badly worn and did not recognise that there were two texts on the stele in different languages. The first copies did not actually reach Europe until after Sayce's initial synthesis, and he later added a treatment of the text to his corpus in a separate article. A reliable copy first became available in 1950 when George Cameron made latex squeezes and passed them on to his student Warren Benedict. The latter's definitive publication appeared a decade later.[47] The unique contributions of this text to both philology and historical reconstruction of Urartu were thus very slow to make their impact, which may be seen as emblematic for the field of Urartology generally. What began as rumour and hearsay took decades to solidify into solid evidence.

[43] Lehmann-Haupt 1910; 1931.
[44] Lehmann-Haupt 1910; 1931, back cover insert.
[45] Barnett 1950, 37.
[46] Rawlinson 1840, 19–21.
[47] Benedict 1960.

Early 20th Century Research

The chronology of Urartian history is based on Assyrian records, and most of the essential texts were published by the late 1920s. From time to time, Assyrian kings mention their Urartian opponents and, much more rarely, Urartian kings mention Assyria. The first references to a land called Uruaṭri appear in the reign of the Middle Assyrian king Shalmaneser I in the 13th century BC. The reign of Shalmaneser III (858–824 BC) documents the increasing consolidation of the polities in the Van area and ultimately the emergence of the Urartian royal line. Eponyms and non-royal inscriptions reflect conflicts with Urartian in the long period of Assyrian weakness that came to an end when Tiglath-Pileser III (744–727 BC) took power and turned the tide. Sargon II's (727–705 BC) interactions are particularly well documented, but thereafter Assyrian records thin out. Sennacherib (704–681 BC) does not mention Urartu at all, and Esarhaddon (680–669 BC) appears to have limited his concern to diplomacy. The last references to Urartian kings are made by Assurbanipal (668–627 BC). Lehmann-Haupt combined these synchronisms with the sequence of Urartian rulers known from Urartian inscriptions, which is essentially seen by following the chain of names and patronymics in royal inscriptions.[48] His system served as the basic framework of historical writing on Urartu through the rest of the 20th century, although in recent decades the contributions of archaeology have somewhat changed perceptions of historical development.

Two epigraphic discoveries made just before the First World War stand out as particularly significant in developing this historical overview. The first was Sargon's letter to the god Assur concerning his eighth campaign of 714 BC. A few fragments of this extraordinary text were found in the pre-war excavations at Assur, establishing its context, but the primary tablet was secreted from the site and eventually turned up in Paris. A masterful edition was published by Francois Thureau-Dangin,[49] presenting a vivid account of Sargon's progress through Urartu and a detailed inventory of items pillaged in his subsequent sack of Musasir and its Haldi temple – the longest surviving record of a single Assyrian campaign. While full of the usual Assyrian bombast and hyperbole, the text betrays a certain respect for Urartian achievements and makes clear that Urartu was not in the same category as most of Assyria's other opponents. The other discovery was made in 1912 by a brief Russian excavation on the north side of the Van Citadel.[50] In a niche the excavators

[48] Lehmann-Haupt 1921.
[49] Thureau-Dangin 1912.
[50] Marr and Orbeli 1922.

unearthed a broken stele which was inscribed with the annals of Sarduri, son of Argishti, who ruled in the second quarter of the 8th century. This, the second-longest Urartian text ever found, second only to the Horhor annals of his father and predecessor, was inscribed on both the stele and the walls of the niche itself. Along with the historical evidence for vigorous Urartian campaigning, it provided clear evidence of the ergative structure of the Urartian language.

One of Lehmann-Haupt's later projects was to assemble an accurate corpus of Urartian texts, illustrated with clear photographs to the extent possible.[51] Lavish in its design, the project was never completed, and by the time the first fascicles appeared, it was clear that the field had advanced beyond Lehmann-Haupt's ken. A new generation of philologists, now schooled in Hittite, Hurrian and the other languages first found in substantial quantity at Boğazköy, began making smaller contributions that revolutionised understanding of Urartian grammar. The grammatical sketch presented by Johannes Friedrich in the 1930s, for example, was dramatically different from Lehmann-Haupt's understanding of the language.[52] For example, the principle of ergativity, so fundamental to Urartian grammar, was now recognised. Other misconceptions, such as the idea that the Urartians had called themselves Chaldians, after the name of their god Haldi, gradually fell away. Earlier names for the language, such as 'Vannic' and 'Chaldian' were replaced by 'Urartian' in reputable scholarship.

While great strides were being made by archaeologists elsewhere in the Near East, very little excavating was being done in Urartu. There were, however, two noteworthy archaeological projects in 1939: an American expedition to Van,[53] and the commencement of Soviet work at Karmir-Blur, then on the outskirts of Yerevan. The Van expedition, led by Kirsopp Lake, essentially ended in failure. Lake himself, a distinguished scholar of early Christianity, was out to find inscriptions, and had little interest in the nuts and bolts of archaeology. Although publicised with a certain amount of fanfare, the expedition did little but clean out an empty niche on the Van Kale, and its finds where lost when the ship transporting them to the United States was torpedoed as it crossed the Atlantic in the early days of the Second World War. The other project was the commencement of Soviet excavations at Karmir-Blur, then in a suburb of Yerevan. Little progress beyond identifying the character of the site was made before the war shut down the excavations, but the ground was prepared for the first major archaeological success on an Urartian site.

[51] Lehmann-Haupt 1928–35.
[52] Friedrich 1931; 1933.
[53] Korfmann 1977.

Before turning to the dramatic advances in scholarship on Urartu that took place after the Second World War, let us summarise what had been achieved in the first century of research. The early history of Urartu, as it was revealed by Assyrian royal inscriptions was fairly well documented, and its chronology was to a certain extent filled in by the more laconic Urartian texts of the late 9th and early 8th centuries. It could be seen that there was a flurry of activity around the time of Sargon's eighth campaign which was generally thought to be climactic, after which Urartu was assumed to linger for at least another century in Assyria's shadow. Archaeology had contributed very little to our understanding of the kingdom's history and its culture. A modest number of Urartian artefacts, generally bronzes and without provenience, was known, but had not been studied systematically. Urartu was understood to have been a great power, but not a single site plan or study of any category of its physical remains had been published. While the distribution of inscriptions gave some idea of the size of Urartian territory, excavation had been almost exclusively confined to the immediate vicinity of Van. This was all to change in the decades after the Second World War.

The Era of Soviet Leadership in Urartology

The 1950s finally put the field of Urartian studies on a solid footing, thanks to several different lines of research. Initially, much of the progress came out of the Soviet Union. We have noted that the Karmir-Blur excavations had begun just before the outbreak of the Second World War. They resumed as early as 1945, but their impact on the field really began with the appearance of the first of Boris Piotrovsky's books on the site in 1950.[54] Karmir-Blur remains one of the most important Urartian sites ever excavated. It was destroyed in a catastrophe that buried masses of cultural material, and this was recovered from the ruins in context. Preservation was excellent. The entire citadel was eventually excavated, along with parts of the outer town. Inscriptions indicated that this site was founded and designated *Teishebai* URU, 'City of the storm god', by Rusa son of Argishti, a contemporary of Esarhaddon of Assyria (680–669 BC). Tablets, pottery collections and above all the large numbers of metal artefacts from its storerooms gave scholarship the first balanced appreciation of what an Urartian assemblage looked like. It was also noteworthy that some of the objects recovered from magazines in the Karmir-Blur Citadel bore inscriptions of 8th-century kings which stated

[54] Piotrovsky 1950; 1952; 1955.

that they had been dedicated in Erebuni, a site built on the hill of Arin-Berd 7.5 km to the east. The conclusion that they had been transferred from their original location to Rusa's new centre was inescapable and gave the first suggestion that an important reorganisation of the kingdom took place in the early 7th century. Although Piotrovsky's work was conducted in the Soviet Union at a time when communications with the West were very limited, news of it circulated widely thanks to Barnett's detailed summaries in English.[55]

Arin-Berd was another excavation project undertaken in Soviet Armenia in these early days of serious excavation.[56] In both his annals and locally found inscriptions, Argishti I claims to have founded site, which apparently gave its name to the modern city of Yerevan. Much less rich in artefacts than Karmir-Blur, the site made its most immediate contributions to Urartology by providing new inscriptions *in situ* and revealing virtually the entire architectural plan of an early of Urartian palace complex. A major Urartian complex was also excavated at Argishtihinili, near Armavir, where the most important discoveries were well appointed houses located between two poorly preserved castles on higher ground.[57]

As this work was being conducted, Barnett undertook to publish the British Museum's collections of the Rassam expedition, which had been mouldering in storerooms for 70 years.[58] This material, although without anything more than a general site context – and not always that, since some of it was purchased – added significantly to what could be said about Urartian art and archaeology. Barnett did what he could with the meagre records of the excavators.

This awakening of archaeological interest in the 1950s was coupled with important philological work, not so much in terms of grammatical insights but rather in compilation and translation of a now very much expanded corpus of texts. A complete collection was published by Friedrich Wilhelm König in Austria and became the standard reference work for European scholars.[59] In the Soviet Union, Giorgi Melikishvili independently published another collection of transliterations and translations, first as a series of articles and later assemble as a single bound volume.[60] The utility of both of these works was that they provided indexes and glossaries, so that a scholar could now

[55] Barnett and Watson 1952; Barnett 1959.
[56] Oganesyan 1961.
[57] Martirosyan 1974.
[58] Barnett 1950.
[59] König 1955–57.
[60] *UKN* (1960).

survey the entire body of inscriptions. Melikishvili's work was supplemented by a further article in the same format as the original articles and the book, so lengthy that it had to be divided between two quarterly journal issues.[61] This added the texts discovered up to 1970 and provided indexes of the new material. Thus Melikishvili's work was more comprehensive than König's, but since he translated the texts only into Russian its value in wider circles of Assyriology was more constrained than it might have been. In Urartology, where Soviet scholarship was the centre of gravity at the time he published, this was less a problem, since most specialists recognised they had to read Russian. In any case, both the König and Melikishvili works became standard references, often cited simultaneously, and were not superseded until the 21st century.

Another very important work was contributed by the great linguist and Assyriologist, Igor Diakonoff,[62] who published all of the Urartian letters and tablet fragments known at the time, including the ones that had been discovered at Karmir-Blur.[63] These documents on clay, unfortunately numbering only 16, were quite different from the royal display inscriptions, both in terms of their script and their subject matter. Diakonoff was to go on to study systematically Urartian grammar in tandem with Hurrian,[64] a practice that is now generally accepted as valid and informative for the understanding of both languages. While the similarity of the languages had been recognised since the 1920s, both in grammar and vocabulary, Diakonoff was the first to present a full comparative grammar.

One of the consequences of this post-war research was that Urartu finally began to come to the attention of a wider public than the small group of Assyriologists who had hitherto concerned themselves with it. Melikishvili wrote a full, single-volume history and Piotrovsky produced an overview that included the new archaeological findings as well.[65] Piotrovsky went on to write several popular books that appeared in English translations which were for a long time the basic sources of information for lay readers in the West.

[61] Melikishvili 1971.

[62] I.M. Dyakonov regularly spelled his name Diakonoff in non-Russian publications, and that is the form used here and throughout the volume. Thus Harutyunyan/Harouthounian is Arutyunyan/Arutiunian as author of his Russian-language book, but Harutyunyan is used throughout this volume; and Piotrovskii is Piotrovsky in his Western guise, and the latter has been used.

[63] Diakonoff 1963.

[64] Diakonoff 1971.

[65] Piotrovsky 1959.

Surveys and Excavations in Turkey and Iran

The last decades of the 20th century were a kind of golden age for Urartian archaeology, in which major surveys greatly enlarged the number of known sites and systematic excavations were initiated in Turkey and Iran. These were coupled with thematic studies of Urartian artefacts, both with context and without, with the result that it became possible to speak of a field of Urartian archaeology that was broader than the efforts of a few specialists working independently. This was very much an international endeavour, building on the findings in Soviet Armenia and spearheaded by Turkish and German projects. British, Italian and American scholars also made significant contributions.

The British archaeologist Charles Burney was in the vanguard of this new phase of archaeological fieldwork. His first contributions came out of survey work that was a far cry from the horseback exploration and inscription-hunting of the 19th century. Burney was interested in Urartian sites themselves, not just for what could be found in them, so identifying fortresses as Urartian and mapping them was his primary objective. He located, sketched and eventually mapped numerous sites in eastern Turkey, including the two fortresses at Anzaf, Kef Kalesi at Adilcevaz, Çavuştepe and the enigmatic planned settlement of Zernaki Tepe.[66] Some of these sites had been noted in accounts of earlier travellers, but many were new discoveries which came to Burney's attention as he traversed the area around Lake Van on foot. Many would later be excavated by Turkish scholars.

A second group of surveys – somewhat later, more sustained and focused on Iranian Azarbaijan – was inspired by Burney's pioneering efforts. Working from the Teheran branch of the Deutsches Archäologishes Institut, Wolfram Kleiss began charting the Urartian presence in north-western Iran in the mid-1960s.[67] This was a time which there was a great deal of archaeological activity in Iran. For example, an American expedition working in and around Hasanlu, in the Ushnu/Solduz valley had established the basic cultural sequence of pre-Urartian periods and its team members had identified the important fortress at Qalatgah through the discovery of an inscription of Minua and Ishpuini. But before the work of Kleiss, which was conducted in annual surveys until it was curtailed by the Iranian Revolution in 1978, the extent to which west Azerbaijan was Urartian territory was unsuspected. Kleiss had been trained as an architect and had an uncanny ability to recognise patterns in seemingly

[66] Burney 1957; Burney and Lawson 1960.
[67] Kleiss 1968.

random patterns of stones at places where no one had even suspected there was an archaeological site. His normal method was to visit locations where he had heard or suspected there might be ruins, draw sketch plans which he quickly published, and later return to draw measured plans, which in their great detail, often were significant revisions of the original sketches. From his base at the DAI, Kleiss was able to conduct annual surveys for more than a decade. For much of this span he was assisted by Stephan Kroll, who developed an expertise on Urartian pottery that was essential for dating sites. The surveys included sites of other periods, but both Kleiss and Kroll made their greatest contributions through work on Urartu.[68] Among the scores of Urartian sites identified were the major centres of Bastam, Qaleh Ismael Aqa, Werachram and Livar, but the essential finding was that Urartu had built fortresses all over western Azerbaijan. This was something that inscriptions only belatedly documented.

All of these pioneers in survey became active excavators as well. In 1965, Burney was the guiding hand of the British excavations at Kayalıdere.[69] After a single productive season work was suspended there and he moved on to Iran. Haftavan, where he began digging in 1968, was a complex tell at which the Urartian levels were only a small component of the cultural materials he unearthed. Also in 1968, Kleiss, assisted by Kroll, began a well-funded and long running series of excavations at perhaps the grandest of the Urartian centres he discovered, Bastam.[70] Political turmoil in Iran ended these projects in 1978.

Turkish archaeologists began making their contribution to Urartian archaeology in this period. In 1938 a tomb had been discovered on the slopes of the north-western frontier site of Altıntepe by road builders. It was not until 1959, however, that Tahsin Özgüç, seasoned by his long-running project at Kültepe, was able to begin excavations to uncover further elite burials and begin exploration of the citadel itself. He unearthed a well-preserved temple and a columned hall which intrudes on the temple precinct and is thus probably not contemporary with it. The temple was beautifully preserved. Similar buildings at Toprakkale, Karmir Blur and Arin-Berd had either been destroyed or redesigned in post-Urartian period, so the Altıntepe temple provided a paradigm for these distinctively Urartian structures. Another example was excavated at Aznavurtepe near Patnos at about the same time, but unfortunately only the inscriptions from this, composed in the name of Minua, were ever published.

[68] For example, Kleiss and Kroll 1977.
[69] Burney 1966.
[70] Kleiss 1979; 1988.

In contrast, Özgüç's Altıntepe publications appeared promptly[71] and had an impact on the field. In the heartland of Urartu, Afif Erzen briefly resumed excavations at Toprakkale and then undertook extensive work at Çavuştepe. The latter was distinguished by impressive ashlar masonry stretched out along a narrow ridge.[72] Two temples were excavated here, one bearing a dedicatory inscription of Sarduri II to the otherwise obscure god Irmushini, and the other, without a dedicatory text, on higher ground overlooking the site. The full architectural plan of the site was exposed by the time the project ended. Another project was undertaken on a similar scale at Kef Kalesi, which overlooks the town of Adilcevaz on the north shore of Lake Van. Here, too, the finds were primarily architectural.[73] Although there was a settlement area below the higher area of public structures with rectangular pilasters with reinforced corners, the whole site was for the most part devoid of small finds, and even pottery was comparatively rare.

In the last decades of the 20th century, a second generation of Turkish excavators, including Taner Tarhan, Oktay Belli, Veli Sevin and Altan Çilingiroğlu increased the range of archaeological research. These included explorations of pre-Urartian sites, like Dilkaya and Karagündüz, and major citadel excavations at Anzaf and Ayanis. Anzaf, which is actually two sites on either side of a road approaching the Van basin, had a long history of occupation, but most to the building documents there pertain the time of Minua. The most spectacular single find from the site is a fragment of a shield depicting the gods of Urartu going into battle.[74] Ayanis, where Altan Çilingiroğlu began excavating in 1989, is the richest fortress excavated in Turkey, and is similar to Karmir-Blur in many ways.[75] It was another creation of Rusa son of Argishti, and destroyed in a conflagration with its magazines full. Its temple, although looted, could be seen to have been elaborately decorated; the interior of its cella was banded by intaglio designs of winged *genii* and animals, and provided with an ornately decorated alabaster podium. The entrance to the temple was inscribed with the longest known inscription of the 8th century. Parts of this are duplicated at Rusa's other foundations, but this is the only place at which the full text has been found. Many the metal objects, from the site, such as a bronze blade with and inscription identifying it as a *šuri* – known from display inscriptions as the weapon of Haldi – and a cylindrical gold handle inscribed with the name of an Urartian queen, are unprecedented.

[71] Özgüç 1966; 1969.
[72] Erzen 1978.
[73] Öğun 1967.
[74] Belli 1999.
[75] Çilingiroğlu and Salvini 2001.

Recent Syntheses

This overview of the history of Urartian studies need not continue into the 21st century, as the rest of this volume provides detailed and up-to-date coverage of that ground. Many of the pages that follow were written by the very scholars who would be the subject of an intellectual history. They are the individuals best positioned to assess the status of research make clear the frontiers of future inquiry. Before bringing this overview to a close, however, it is worth noting some very significant works of synthesis that have appeared recently and will probably serve as tools of research for some time to come.

Foremost among these are collections of inscriptions. New texts have appeared with some regularity over recent decades thanks largely to excavation, but not insignificantly to continuing exploration of remote areas. After Melikishvili, who stopped updating his corpus in the early 1970s, the first new attempt at a new comprehensive publication of texts was offered by Nikolai Harutyunyan [Harouthounian/Arutyunyan/Arutiunian].[76] This essentially followed Melikishvili's format: texts ordered in a single numerical sequence: bibliography of previous studies of each; transliterations, and translation into Russian. As a single volume it is conveniently indexed and easy to use, for those who read Russian. It had the misfortune to appear just before some important new texts were uncovered: 1) the full text of the 'foundation inscription' of Rusa son of Argishti from Ayanis, which ties together other inscriptions of that king from Karmir-Blur, Toprakkale, Adilcevaz and Bastam;[77] and 2) the Gövelek and Savacık steles which complete the long known Keşiş Göl text. The system of numbering texts in order of the rulers was also somewhat overwhelmed by the pace at which short texts on dedicated objects were coming out of the ground. For example, it was difficult to keep track of all the texts give a simple dedication by Rusa son of Argishti at Ayanis. After the break-up of the Soviet Union, less and less of the academic literature on Urartu was written in Russian, and this too may have impeded Harutyunyan's book from having the impact the labour of its creation deserved.

Mirjo Salvini's *Corpus dei Testi Urarteii* (*CTU*), long in the works, began appearing in 2008. Far larger in scope than any of the earlier comprehensive collections of texts, it seems likely to remain definitive for at least as long as the collections of König and Melikishvili held sway. The first three volumes, which appeared at once, were devoted to the monumental royal inscriptions on stone. A fourth volume, which included all known inscriptions on metal and

[76] Harutyunyan 2001.
[77] *CTU* (2008).

clay as well as a sign list illustrating all variants of Urartian cuneiform with photographs, appeared in 2012. The texts are classified first by the materials on which they are written and then, where possible, by the ruler under which they were written. The system is thus flexible enough to incorporate new discoveries of royal display inscriptions, for example, without having the change the designations of already published texts – something the earlier collections did not do. The relegation of shorter inscriptions, such as capacity designators on the shoulders of pithoi, to a separate volume eliminates much of the clutter of the earlier works while sacrificing nothing in comprehensiveness. The volumes include collated transliterations, photographs to the extent possible, and translations into Italian. The very lavishness of Salvini's project may be its greatest weakness, as the inevitable expense of producing something of this kind for the limited number people who want the last word on Urartian will confine it to best-endowed libraries.

The study of Urartian history has also been aided by new studies of Assyrian inscriptions. While these have not offered new material to the same extent that additions to the body of Urartian texts have, more authoritative readings of Assyrian texts form the backdrop for most current historical arguments. Various volumes in University of Toronto's *Royal Inscriptions of Mesopotamia* series[78] and Helsinki University's *State Archives of Assyria*[79] are particularly important in this regard.

Although there have been many brief overviews of Urartian material culture and history, some of which have appeared in conjunction with museum exhibitions, there have been curiously few substantial monographs published on the subject since the works of Piotrovsky and van Loon were published half a century ago.[80] The most recent single-authored work to embrace Urartu as a whole was offered by Salvini.[81] Scholarly works such as Ursula Seidl's comprehensive study of Urartian bronzes[82] demonstrate the potential of more specialised efforts. A major treatment of many aspects of Urartu, including several important chapters debating chronological issues of the end of the kings came out of the conference held in Munich in 2007 mentioned above,[83] raising issues that are by no means resolved. This book, and a graphically stunning multi-authored Turkish/English survey,[84] are as close as one can get

[78] For example, Grayson 1996.
[79] For example, Parpola 1987; Lanfranchi and Parpola 1990.
[80] Poitrovsky 1969; van Loon 1966.
[81] Salvini 1995.
[82] Seidl 2004.
[83] Kroll *et al*. 2012.
[84] Köroğlu and Konyar 2011.

to a summation of the current state of Urartian scholarship, although the author's judgment on this point may be somewhat clouded by his personal involvement with both publications.

Despite the successes of the past, the study of Urartu is still an immature discipline, with great potential for future advances. What passes for history is remains a hollow scaffolding of royal pronouncements rather than a dense matrix of social, economic, and ideological facts. New royal inscription fragments will doubtless continue to appear and augment the corpus of these 'historical' texts, but are not likely to transform our view of Urartu. With regard to more mundane inscriptions on clay, there is much more to hope for. Although no major archive of Urartian clay tablets has yet been found, we know that letters, inventories, and school texts were written in the kingdom and it seems only a matter of time and patient excavation before one comes to light. The isolated finds of bullae and tablet fragments at sites like Bastam, Karmir-Blur, and Ayanis show that scribes were hard at work on Urartian citadels of the 7th century. A single excavation season at one of the major 7th-century citadels might suddenly yield thousands of tablets. If that happens, our knowledge of what was going on below the level of the rulers would be instantly transformed. It wouldn't take many letters to change the current situation, in which we know only two feminine names and almost every verb is in the first or third person past tense, and bring Urartian philology in line with what can be done with Hittite, Hurrian or Akkadian. Likewise, archaeology is no longer constrained by a concentration on citadels and objects of fine art. As more sites of the period are exposed, and excavations are conducted near and beyond the erstwhile political boundaries of Biainili, a much more sophisticated conception of exactly what the phenomenon of Urartu meant to the peoples of the past, and means to us today, will come into view.

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EASTERN ANATOLIA BEFORE THE URARTIAN AGE*

Mehmet IŞIKLI

Abstract

The eastern Anatolian highlands, which were the major territory of the Urartian people, first gained a central political structure and literary tradition by way of the Urartian state. Today, the stark ruins of monumental fortresses found in the highlands belong mostly to this period. Archaeological attention in the region has focused on Urartian culture, and archaeologists in the main have ignored the pre-Urartian periods in the highlands. Thus, our knowledge of the prehistoric period in the region, including the Palaeolithic, Mesolithic and Neolithic, is very limited. After the Chalcolithic, the highlands became host to a great and complex cultural phenomenon in the Early Bronze Age, the Kura-Araxes culture. Following on from this, is the age of the Kurgan People, and then the Early Iron Age. The main aim of this paper is to present, in general terms, an archaeological background of the pre-Urartian period of the highlands.

BORDERS, GEOGRAPHY AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS

The Urartian state was the dominant political entity of the northern mountainous zone of the ancient Near East in the 1st millennium BC. Although it is accepted that the territory of this state, namely the Land of Urartu, was centred on the Lake Van basin, certain of its borders are still disputed.[1] The general view is that the Land of Urartu was broadened to include three lakes: Van, Urmia and Sevan. Nevertheless, it is not easy to describe the political and cultural borders of the Urartian state. According to current available evidence, the Taurus mountain belt, which separates the highland zone linked to the southern Caucasus, and the lowland sector linked to the Mesopotamian world, determined the southern border of the Land of Urartu. Actually, this mountain range was a border for all cultures arising in the highland zone (in the northern region of the ancient Near East), one example of which is the Kura-Araxes culture. The subject of the expansion of Urartian political and cultural existence

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[1] About this, see a recent study Köroğlu 2011.

beyond the Taurus range is still a matter of debate among archaeologists working on this culture.[2] The western border of the Urartian lands was determined roughly by the Euphrates; and as for the eastern and northern borders, according to current research these borders apparently are not easy to clarify. In the light of Urartian inscriptions, the north/north-eastern border of the Land of Urartu should be the Araxes valley, while the Zagros range of mountains roughly forms the south-eastern border (Fig. 1).

Eastern Anatolia, centred upon the Lake Van basin, was the most important sector of Urartian territory, with its borders defined as mentioned above. Here, whenever 'the Land of Urartu' is mentioned, it should be understood largely to be eastern Anatolia. This region, which covers one-fifth of modern-day Turkey, also encompasses part of the Caucasus, north-western Iran, Upper Mesopotamia and the Anatolian plateau. Modern geographers divide this into four sub-regions, with each one forming separate cultural regions. It was in the Early Bronze and Iron Ages that these territories, based on cultural development, were established (Fig. 2).

The regional geography of eastern Anatolia consists primarily of mountain ranges rising up to 3000 m, high plateaux, and lowland river valleys and basins. These depressions and river valleys which lie among the mountain ridges are also called 'ecological niches' as they have provided favourable living space for each period throughout history. These low, flat plains and valleys present sheltered areas against the harsh continental climate conditions for communities living in that region. Because of the altitude, these conditions dominate the whole region, and as a result, it receives heavy rain and snow. The annual precipitation is around 700 mm,[3] resulting in large pastures which remain fresh and green over a long period. Although the region is unsuitable for extensive agriculture, these environmental conditions have established animal husbandry as the main subsistence strategy for its people throughout history. The people living here undertake agricultural activities only to meet their own needs and to provide winter feed for their animals, usually engaging in dry farming. We can describe this model as 'extensive stock-breeding supported by farming'[4] (Fig. 3).

In the Urartian period, our information regarding the climatic and environmental conditions of the region is not yet clear-cut, although we have some evidence. The results of pollen analysis taken from three lakes within the Land

[2] For more detailed knowledge about southern border of the Land of Urartu and Assyrian-Urartian relationships, see Kessler 1995; Işıklı 1998.

[3] *http://www.mgm.gov.tr/FILES/arastirma/2012-yagis-degerlendirmesi.pdf*.

[4] Erdem 2018, 329–34; Işıklı forthcoming.

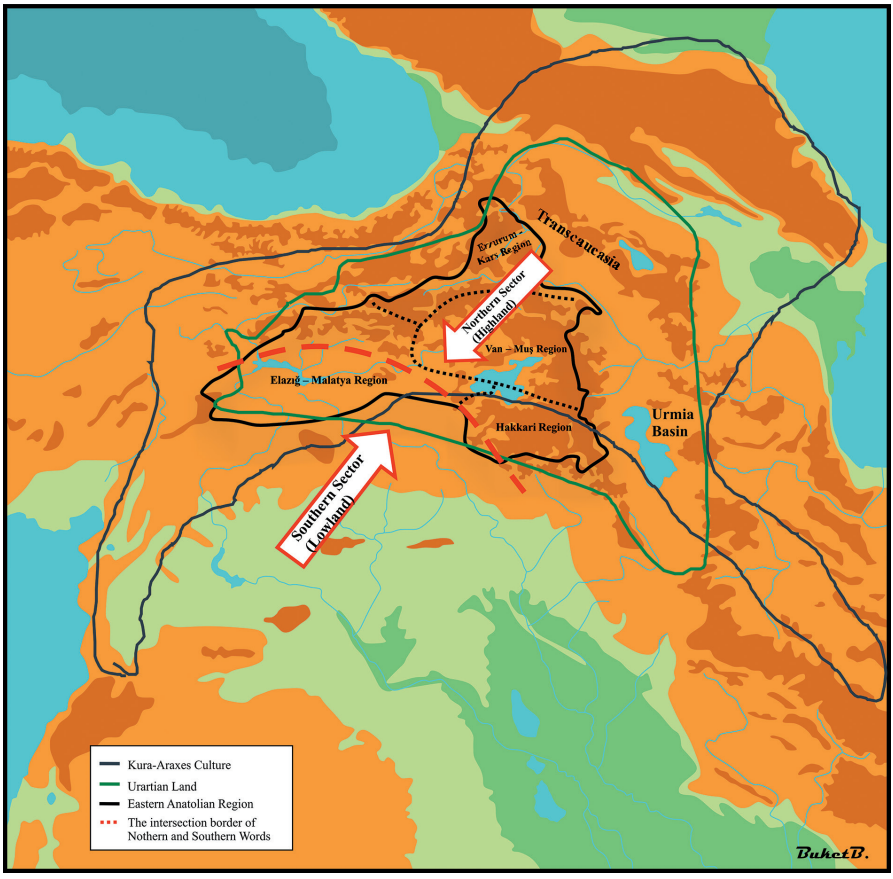

Fig. 1. General map of the Near East showing cultural regions and eastern Anatolia.

of Urartu – lakes Urmia, Van and Söğütlü[5] – are vitally significant in this regard. The sample results provide essential clues concerning the environmental conditions and vegetation of the region, not only in Urartian times, but back to at least the Early Holocene.[6] According to these results, sub-arid step vegetation dominated the region prior to 10,000 years ago. Almost 5000 years later this vegetation and related climatic conditions had given way to woody vegetation with a corresponding warmer and more humid climate. The results indicate that the areas located south of Lake Van, whose elevation is 1700 m above sea

[5] Samples were also taken from Lake Zeribar located in western Iran (van Zeist and Bottema 1991, 64).

[6] For more detailed information, see van Zeist and Bottema 1991, 57–67; Işıklı 2005, 36–37.

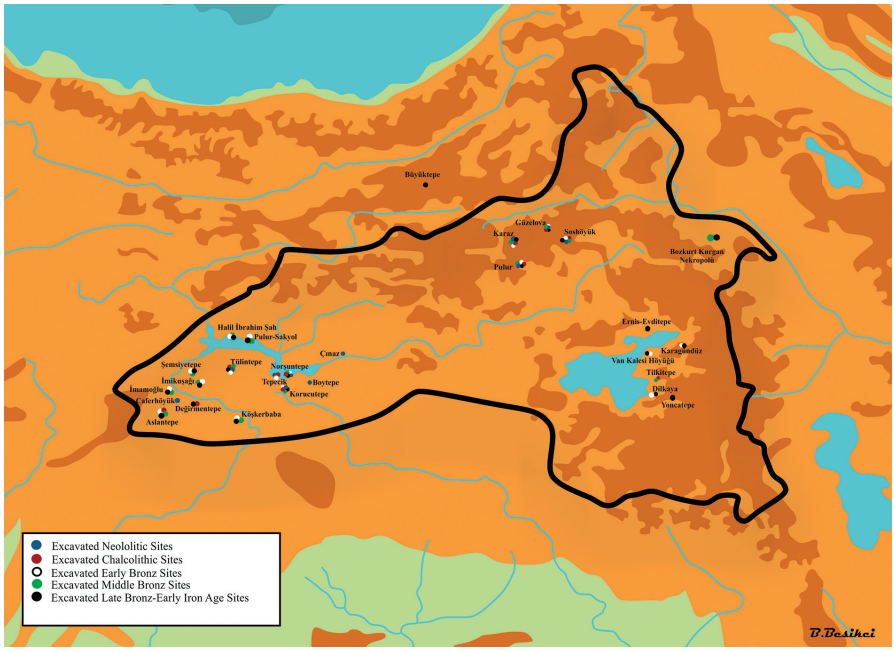

Fig. 2. Map showing major excavated sites of the pre-Urartian period in eastern Anatolia.

Fig. 3. The landscape of Urartu: mountain ranges, high plateaux and lowland river valleys and basins.

level, were covered with extensive forest at that time. Excavations of Urartian fortresses attest to this,[7] as many great woods have been found.

When describing their campaigns against the Urartians on Urartian territory in their annals, Assyrian kings mentioned dense forests on this land.[8] Documentation from the Ottoman empire gives similar information. Finally, recent research concerning prehistoric climatic and environmental conditions in Georgia, neighbouring the Urartian lands, has presented similar results. Results of pollen samples which were taken from two lakes located on the Tsalka plateau show that there were warm and humid climatic conditions and dense forest in Transcaucasia in the Late Prehistoric period (from the Mesolithic to the end of the Bronze Age).[9]

Eastern Anatolia in the Prehistoric Period

Regrettably, the mountainous district where the Urartian state was established is one of the least known regions in the ancient Near East during prehistory. This is also the case in eastern Anatolia, which was a substantial part of the Land of Urartu. However, our knowledge about the prehistoric period for some parts of eastern Anatolia, such as the Lake Van basin and the Upper Euphrates and Araxes valleys, is more substantial than for the mountainous districts, and an increase in archaeological activity in the southern Caucasus, the neighbouring region to the Urartian land, is presenting some noteworthy hints concerning regional prehistory (Fig. 4).[10]

While sporadic finds of stone tools and paintings on caves and rocks enable us to say something about the prehistory of the region, such evidence has, unfortunately, never been subject to systematic investigation. According to prehistorians, *Homo Erectus* – responsible for the design of Acheulian technology – roamed this region, flowing from the Levant to the southern Caucasus and Eurasia through eastern Anatolia (in a rough line from Antakya to Kars);[11] but no trace of this human group has been found so far in Anatolia. Several surveys

[7] Huge round timbers have been found at excavations at Ayanis. They are mostly Scots pine (*Pinus silvestris*/Sarıçam) and Austrian pine (*Pinus nigra*/karaçam). For more details, see Kuniholm and Newton 2001.

[8] Timber was part of substantial booty for the Assyrian kings who campaigned in regions in the north, particularly in eastern Anatolia. For more information, see Işıklı 1998, 309–11.

[9] Within the scope of a recent project concerning the palaeogeography of Trancaucasia, some samples have been taken for pollen analyses from the Imera and Aligöl lakes on the Tsalka plateau, close to Urartian territory. For more, see Connor and Sagona 2007.

[10] For a general assessment of the increasing number of archaeological projects in Transcaucasia, see Sagona 2010.

[11] Taşkıran 2006.

> REGIONS >	MALATYA - ELAZIĞ REGION (Upper Euphrates Valley)						ERZURUM-KARS REGION (Erzurum – Kars Plateau)			VAN – MUŞ REGION (Van Lake Basm)		
vPERİODSv >SİTES>	Cafer Höyük	Arslan Tepe	Korucu Tepe	Norşun Tepe	Tepecik	Pulur Sakyol	Bayburt Büyük Tepe	Pulur	Sos Höyük	Tilki Tepe	Dilkaya	Kara gündüz
Neolithic Period 10500 - 5500												
Aceramic Neolithic Period 10500- 8000	XIII-V 9560- 8950 8300- 7450											
Ceramic Neolithic Period 8000- 5500	IV-I 5730- 5660				X	XIII- XII						
Chalcolithic Period 5500- 3200/3000												
Early Chalcolithic Age 5500- 5000			A Halaf		Halaf					III Halaf 5300 - 5000		
Middle Chalcolithic Age 5000- 4000		VIII Ubeyd 4250- 3900	A 4250± 71	XL- XXXI 4500-3500	Ubeyd			4220-4020		II Ubeyd 4600-4000		
Late Chalcolithic Age 4000- 3200/3000		VII Uruk 3750- 3300	B 3500-3000 3420+40/3195±75	XL-XXXI 4500-3500	Uruk 4250- 3000			3500-3000	V A 3500/ 3300-3000 3500- 3435 3385-3285	II 3700		
Chalcolithic – Bronze Age Transition 3200- 3000		VI A 3300- 2900	B 3500- 3000	3100- 2900			3303- 2616 3300-2600			II-I 3700-3000		
Early Bronze Age 3200/3000 - 2000	x?		C-F 3000-2000		x		x	2863- 2330	3095- 2480/ 2200	I 3200-3000		
EBA IA 2900		VI BI 3100-2800 2900 -2700	VI BC 285 - 2709	XXX- XXV 3303 - 2926	x	XI- IX 3000-2750	x		VB 3000-2800			
EBA IB 2700		VI BII 2700- 2600	VI C	XXX- XXV 2900-2700	x		x				2650	
EBA IIA 2600		VI CI 2612- 2500	VI C	XXIV -XXI 2881 – 2614/ 2700-2500	x		x		VC 2800-2500		x	VII 2561-2481
EBA IIB 2500		VI CI 2500- 2461	VI D 2848 - 2614 2613 - 2503	XX- XIV 2700-2500	x	VIII 2470 ±150			VC 2800-2500		VA- VB 2500	VII
EBA IIIA 2300		VI DI 2451- 2288	VI E 2612 - 2465	XV-XI 2458 - 2324	x	V 2350±150			VD 2500-2200	O 2300-2200	2300	
EBA IIIB 2150		VI DII 2140- 2041	VI F 2150-2000	X- IX 2170	x	IV- I			VD 2500-2200		x	
EBA IIIC (EBA - MBA TRANSİTİON) 2150 - 2000		VI D 2041- 2000	VI F	VIII-VI 2170-2000	x						x	
Middle Bronze Age 2000 - 1750/1600		V-IV 2000/1750- 1600	G-H	III-V 2000- 1900/1800	x		x?		IV A-B A 2200-2000 B 2000-1500	O 1700	IV 1900- 1400/1300	VI
Late Bronze Age 1750/1600-1250/1200		IV 1600- 1200	I-J		x		x?		III 1500-1000			VI
Iron Age 1250/1200 - 330/50		III 1200- 900	K-L EIA	II EIA I MIA	x		x	x	IIA EIA 1000-800/750 IIB MIA- LIA 800/750-300	O 900-600	III, EIA 1100-800 II, MIA 800-600	V EIA Iv MIA III LBA

Fig. 4. Chronological table of eastern Anatolia based on stratigraphic and radiocarbon data.

in the region have identified Palaeolithic activity: in the 1940s K. Kökten[12] and M. Şenyürek[13] surveyed the Erzurum-Kars plateau, and in the 1960s and 1970s M. Özdoğan surveyed the Upper Euphrates valley.[14] Kökten's project, which was also the first systematic work on this matter, presented the first substantial information about the prehistory of the region. He reported that there were obsidian workshops dating to the Palaeolithic period,[15] and some of these have since been found during recent surveys in the region.[16] The earlier surveys were conducted in the Upper Euphrates and on the Kars plateau, but unfortunately not in the rest of the region.[17] Thus it is not easy to present a clear picture of the prehistory of the Land of Urartu (Fig. 5).

At the beginning of the Neolithic, settled life and farming in the highlands of eastern Anatolia began later than in other parts of the ancient Near East, especially the lowlands. It is probable that this mountainous and rugged area, with its difficult climatic and environmental conditions, was not suitable for Neolithic settlers. But there has been an increase in the study of the Neolithic in recent years, and the theory of the 'Neolithic of the Mountainous Region' has been brought into question among experts, especially with the discovery of, and the evidence from, Göbeklitepe in the hilly area of the Urfa region. According to such experts, the entirety of developments in the mountainous district differs greatly from that of the lowlands and coastal regions, both culturally and regionally:[18] they believe that the cave and rock paintings discovered in mountainous parts of the region, such as at Hakkari and Kars, might have been connected with migrant settlers of the Pre-Pottery Neolithic period of Upper Mesopotamia. It is probable that these groups, of varying sizes, which roamed all across this region, might have been hunting and searching for raw materials such as obsidian.[19] The rock paintings in the highlands located south of Lake Van are remarkable in this regard. Some scholars associate the rock art in the Tirişin, Sat and Yedisalkım highlands – even though dating is problematic – with hunter-gatherer groups of the Pre-Pottery Neolithic in southern Anatolia[20] lured into the highlands in pursuit of animals but also of

[12] Kökten 1948.
[13] Şenyürek 1944, 350–51.
[14] Özdoğan 1977.
[15] Kökten reported that two obsidian workshops in Van and Elazığ province dated to the Middle Palaeolithic (Kökten 1947).
[16] Marro and Özfırat 2004.
[17] In this respect, the results of a new project relating to the prehistory of the region, conducted at the obsidian workshop at Gürgür Baba in the Van basin, are remarkable. See Baykara *et al*. 2018.
[18] Özdoğan 2007.
[19] Özdoğan 2009; Schmidt 2000.
[20] Kılıç 2004.

raw materials such as obsidian and chlorite, the basic material for stone wares in the Pre-Pottery Neolithic. Eastern Anatolia, where the Urartian lands were located, is very rich in raw materials, and one of two well-known sources of obsidian in the ancient Near East is located in eastern Anatolia; and so the 'obsidian trade' model occupies an important position in this region (Fig. 5).[21]

The earliest and most substantial archaeological evidence of the Neolithic period of eastern Anatolia comes from the Upper Euphrates valley, where rescue excavations were conducted between the 1960s and 1980s; in particular, surveys and excavations occasioned by the construction of the Keban and Karakaya dams on the Euphrates presented evidence from the Pre-Pottery Neolithic. Excavations on Boytepe and Çınaz Höyük on the Altınova plain in Elazığ[22] and Cafer Höyük on the Malatya plain demonstrated the presence of pre-pottery layers in the region.[23] The flint and obsidian tools from these three sites showed that the Neolithic period had begun in the second part of the 9th millennium BC, namely the Pre-Pottery Neolithic B period.[24] Also, the Late Neolithic period has been verified at excavations on Tepecik in the Altınova plain in Elazığ[25] and İkiz Höyük in the Malatya plain. This limited archaeological evidence shows that each phase of the Neolithic period in the Euphrates valley is represented; however, because of the limited research, the dynamics of the Neolithic process in eastern Anatolia cannot be sufficiently understood. And the rest of the region, in particular the mountainous sections, still maintains its silence (Figs. 2 and 5).

The Chalcolithic brought with it striking transformations all across the Near East. Undoubtedly, the expansion of the cultures which originated in Mesopotamia and their evolution into states left their mark. The process affected eastern Anatolia too, and gave rise to considerable development in the highland zone. This vast and wide-ranging region was a prime target for the imperial expansion of mighty cultures such as Halaf, Ubaid and Uruk, which were emerging in the lowlands of Mesopotamia. These first imperial powers lacked raw materials, and as they were expanded and sought new regions to exploit, they established complex interregional networks to provide for their demands, in which the Euphrates and Tigris rivers were the main lines of transport and communication. Archaeological evidence validating the existence of this network has been found during excavations in the Upper

[21] Chataigner *et al*. 2013.
[22] Harmankaya *et al*. 1997: Çınaz III and Boytepe.
[23] Cauvin *et al*. 2007.
[24] Harmankaya *et al*. 1997: Çınaz III and Boytepe.
[25] Esin 2001b.

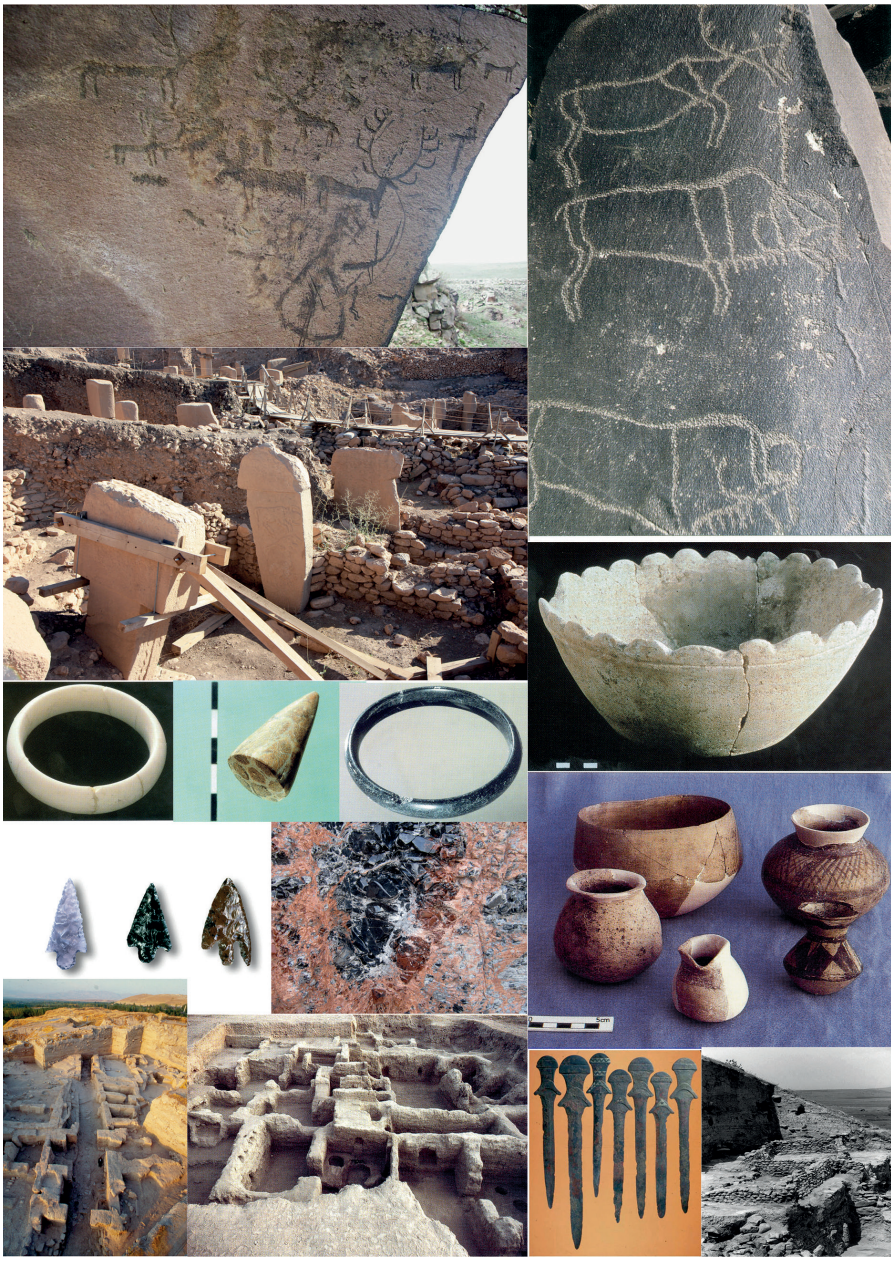

Fig. 5. Eastern Anatolia in the Prehistoric period:
hunters and gatherers of the Pre-Pottery Neolithic period;
raw materials, trade and relationships with the Mesopotamian world.

Euphrates valley, for example at Değirmentepe,[26] Arslantepe[27] and Tepecik,[28] and also at Tilkitepe[29] in the Lake Van basin (Figs. 2 and 5).

Tilkitepe was the northernmost site to be reached by Halafian traders according to materials excavated there. This site, which is close to Mt Nemrut (an eminent source of obsidian), was an important exchange centre for the obsidian trade between eastern Anatolia and the Mesopotamian world. Similarly, excavations at Değirmentepe on the Malatya plain produced evidence relating to the copper ore trade with merchants from Ubaid. South-eastern Anatolia, (in particular the Middle Euphrates) and eastern Anatolia, (in particular the Upper Euphrates) were source areas for the 'Uruk World System', which is accepted as being the first imperial exploitation system in the ancient world. The trading stations and outposts established all along the Euphrates and its branches were vital elements in this system for the flow of raw materials from north to south. Archaeological materials relating to this activity have been found by excavations at Arslantepe, Korucutepe, Tepecik and Tülintepe, all of which were regional centres of the Upper Euphrates. Undoubtedly, the key site for this process in the region was Arslantepe. Systematic excavation has been underway there for 50 years, and has introduced and demonstrated the advanced level of development – cultural, socio-economic and political – achieved in this region. The excavations at Arslantepe show that there was an elite group who became wealthy by trade and, as a consequence, held both political and religious power during this period.[30] Within eastern Anatolia, all the available evidence points to the Upper Euphrates as being advanced and prominent in all aspects. A range of survey projects conducted in recent years to the north of Lake Van basin, namely in the Muş and Ağrı provinces, has also produced striking evidence concerning cultural and economic relationships between the north and south. These have demonstrated the existence of 'chaff-faced wares' in this hilly area which are very similar to samples of Amuq phase F,[31] while recent archaeological projects in Nakhchivan have shown that this chaff-faced ware reached as far as the Araxes valley: the results of excavations there at Ovcular Tepesi are rather significant.[32] In addition, the results of surveys conducted in the Lake Van basin have presented some clues concerning the existence of relationships with north-western Iran.[33] As can be seen from this,

[26] Esin 2001a.
[27] Frangipane 2012.
[28] Esin 2001b.
[29] Korfmann 1982.
[30] Frangipane 2012.
[31] Özfırat and Marro 2007.
[32] Marro 2011.
[33] Marro and Özfırat 2004, 232–33.

the extent of coverage of the north–south cultural and trading network and its impacts are more far reaching than expected. The major part of eastern Anatolia, namely the Land of Urartu, was involved in this network. But it should be emphasised that the northern highland zone of the Taurus range never became as attractive to the Mesopotamians as the southern part.

As for the Erzurum-Kars plateau, which is located further north and neighbouring the southern Caucasus, our knowledge of this period is limited, depending as it does on systematic archaeological research. Most of the archaeological evidence derives from excavations at Sos Höyük located in the Araxes valley. Not long ago we gained knowledge of a further Late Chalcolithic period for this region. This recent project has brought to light the existence of a Middle Chalcolithic period on the plateau, and this is now up for discussion.[34] The Sos excavations have revealed that there was a local culture, including local pottery and architectural traditions, supported by animal husbandry with a farming model, which shared relationships with the southern Caucasus in the Erzurum region in the Late Chalcolithic period. At that time Sos Höyük was a settlement with a monumental stone wall enclosure. According to A.G. Sagona, excavator of Sos, the Erzurum-Kars plateau and a substantial part of the southern Caucasus constituted a vast cultural region,[35] which recent studies have shown would have played an active role in incorporating local cultures into the Kura-Araxes cultural complex, the first cultural unit in the highland zone (Fig. 2 and 5).

Late Chalcolithic–Early Bronze Age: Kura-Araxes Cultural Complex

Towards the end of the Chalcolithic period, in conjunction with the collapse of a central socio-economic and political system and rising strong trade relationships with the Mesopotamian world, eastern Anatolia – particularly the Upper Euphrates valley – entered into a new phase. As stated above, the Upper Euphrates held a strong attraction for communities by virtue of the advanced socio-economic and cultural level it had attained (although archaeological evidence has demonstrated that the relationships between this region and north-eastern Anatolia and Transcaucasia had begun much earlier). It would now appear that these mobile pastoral groups had been playing an active role in the interregional relationships network since the Chalcolithic period. After

[34] Işıklı 2008; Sagona and Zimansky 2009, 125–27. The rescue excavations at Alaybeyi Höyük in the Erzurum plain (2016–17) yielded remarkable results about the region in the Chalcolithic period. For more, see Işıklı 2019.

[35] Kiguradze and Sagona 2003; Sagona and Zimansky 2009, 163–67; Sagona 2014.

the collapse of the central economic and political systems, these groups began to have a voice in the cultural development of the region and their achievement was to establish the first cultural unit of the highland zone (Fig. 4).[36]

This cultural unit, which has been revealed in archaeological traces across an enormous geographical area, is still a broad topic of discussion among Near Eastern archaeologists. It is known as the Early Transcaucasian or Kura-Araxes culture, and has particular cultural components. The hallmarks of it are: buildings are round, or rectangular with rounded corners, some with stone bases, and with walls of mud-brick or wattle-and-daub; pottery is highly burnished and coloured with a red interior and black exterior, and surfaces with incised, relief or grooved-dimple decoration; hearth and irons are fixed or portable with distinctive forms and decoration.[37] Although it spread over quite a large area, regionalism is another characteristic attribute of this cultural unit. When considering the archaeological materials, the existence of sub-cultural regions can clearly be recognised. This situation is valid for eastern Anatolia too. During the development of this culture, three sub-cultural regions can be observed: Erzurum-Kars plateau, Elazığ-Malatya region (Upper Euphrates) and Van-Muş region. In each sub-region the development process and cultural materials differed greatly.[38] Geographically and chronologically, this is one of the great cultures in Near Eastern archaeology, and the main reason for this could be that the people within it were peace-loving and conformist. These communities managed to integrate with local people and with the other cultures of the regions into which they expanded, and by this means they managed to subsist in a harsh geographical environment, including the Land of Urartu, for more than a millennium (Fig. 6).

As mentioned above, three sub-regions can be distinguished in eastern Anatolia for the Kura-Araxes culture. Unfortunately, due to a lack of systematic surveys and excavations across the region, our knowledge about the borders and internal dynamics of these sub-regions is extremely limited. When considering the materials of the Kura-Araxes culture, it is possible to notice the regional variations for eastern Anatolia, and in the light of available evidence, we have some general information. In the Erzurum-Kars plateau, this cultural complex arose from local cultures merging with local cultures from the southern Caucasus. In the second phase of the cultural development of the plateau, distinctive features appeared which attracted attention, namely the

[36] Palumbi 2008, 309–23; Işıklı 2011, 256–89.

[37] For more information about the Kura-Araxes culture, see Işıklı 2011; Palumbi and Chataigner 2014.

[38] For sub-cultural regions of the Kura-Araxes culture, see Işıklı 2015.

Fig. 6. The Kura-Araxes cultural complex
(the first cultural unity in ancient eastern Anatolia).

relationships developing with the southern Caucasus and. in particular, Armenia. In the last phase, new developments show the cultural structure becoming localised. Excavations at Sos Höyük on the Pasinler plain, Büyüktepe Höyük on the Bayburt plain, and Karaz, Pulur, Alabeyi and Güzelova Höyüks on the Erzurum plain provide the archaeological evidence for these changes (Fig. 2).[39]

In the Euphrates valley the picture seems more complex because of complicated interregional relationships.[40] In the earlier phase, when the regional politico-economic system, which had relied on relationships with the Mesopotamian world, collapsed, this cultural complex already had established relationships in the region, filling the gap left as a result of this collapse. But it could not dominate the region (which had maintained strong interregional relationships over quite a long time) by itself. After a while the interregional relationship network was re-established and as a result the culture became localised by integrating with local and neighbouring cultures. The archaeological indications of this are well known because of excavations at key sites in the region, such as Arslantepe, Tepecik, Norşuntepe, Korucutepe, Ayrılacak and Pulur/Sakyol (Fig. 2 and 6).

The Van-Muş region has received less attention from research projects, thus our knowledge relating to the development of the Kura-Araxes culture is fragmentary. We know almost nothing about the earlier phase of the culture (and the situation is not much different for later phases), just that the Kura-Araxes cultural phenomenon followed a process which had no strong interregional relationships and was quite distinctive. The archaeological evidence for this culture has been found at only two excavated sites in this region – Karagündüz and Dilkaya, located in the Lake Van basin (Figs. 2 and 6).[41]

As has been shown, this cultural complex, which was the most prominent culture of eastern Anatolia, presents many persistent problems.[42] These vary from its chronology to its regionalism. Undoubtedly the main reasons for them are the vast geography and the enduring nature of the culture. Solving these problems depends on an increase in systematic archaeological investigation whereby we can enhance our knowledge and understanding of this vital and significant cultural complex.[43]

[39] Işıklı 2015.
[40] Frangipane 2014; Palumbi 2017.
[41] Işıklı 2015.
[42] For more details about its problems, see Işıklı 2011, 41–63.
[43] Palumbi and Chataigner 2014.

Eastern Anatolia in the Middle Bronze Age: Kurgan Peoples and Local Cultures

While the Kura-Araxes cultural phenomenon had been effective across an enormous region ranging from the Caucasian mountains to the lowlands of the Levant for almost a millennium, at the same time there was a cultural and ethnic dynamism in the North and South Caucasus. New groups, which had been seen since the beginning of the 3rd millennium BC in the Caucasus and neighbouring areas, were arriving from the north. These groups, well-known for their monumental graves, are known as 'Kurgan People' in Near Eastern archaeology.[44] Their monumental graves, *kurgans*, reflected a new burial custom, while also containing very rich grave-goods: very high quality pottery – monochrome with incised decoration, or painted with rich decoration – and metal objects ranging from weapons to ornaments. The pottery tradition of the Kurgan People is known by different names such as 'Van-Urmia Painted Ware' or '2nd Millennium Painted Pottery';[45] however the *kurgans* found in the South Caucasus were not as rich as those in eastern Anatolia. Since the settlements belonging to these groups have yet to be identified clearly, the groups have been accepted as 'mobile pastoral communities' (Fig. 7).[46]

After a while these groups of Kurgan People moved to the south by way of eastern Anatolia, including the Urartian lands. The details of this process, roughly corresponding to the Middle Bronze Age in eastern Anatolia, cannot be understood fully for want of systematic research. Available data indicate that there were two different sub-cultural regions in eastern Anatolia (as with the Kura-Araxes culture): a Northern including the Erzurum-Kars plateau, and a Southern, which included the Van-Muş region and the Upper Euphrates. In terms of geographical setting and sub-cultural regions, the Kura-Araxes culture and the Kurgan Peoples almost overlapped (Fig. 7).

In the Northern zone, excavations at Sos Höyük have shown that there was a complete change in the cultural process including different customs, grave types, pottery traditions and settled life.[47] As mentioned above, in the course of this the Kura-Araxes pottery tradition continued by becoming diversified and localised. Apart from Sos, the best pottery samples of this late phase are seen on Güzelova Höyük. Also found on this site were rectangular houses with multiple rooms. These buildings show that settled life was not interrupted

[44] Özfırat 2002a; Puturidze 2003.
[45] Çilingiroğlu 2001, 378–81.
[46] Erdem 2018; Işıklı 2017.
[47] Sagona 2004.

Fig. 7. The culture of the 2nd Millennium BC in the highlands: painted pottery and *kurgans*.

during this development in the region. As for burial customs, shaft graves including humble grave-goods have been found in the relevant levels of Sos.[48]

For the Southern zone, which includes the Urartu homeland, the picture is a bit different. According to limited excavations, settled life was interrupted during this period. There was desolation on the mounds. One explanation for this is a return to a life of mobility. Unfortunately there has been no systematic excavation about this period in eastern Anatolia. A recent related project is the excavation on Bozkurt *kurgan* necropolis in Ağrı province. According to the results of this excavation, we do not find monumental *kurgans* with rich grave-goods.[49] On the other hand, during surveys conducted in the 2000s, many kurgans and temporary camp sites were found in the highlands of the Lake Van basin. These *kurgans*, although lacking such rich metal objects as were found in the southern Caucasus, contained high quality painted vases.[50] In addition, there is a very rich assemblage of painted vases of this period held in regional museums, mainly the fruits of illegal excavations (Figs. 2 and 7).[51]

Late Bronze–Early Iron Age Transition: Nomadic/Semi-Nomadic Chiefdoms and Tribes

The transition period from the Late Bronze to the Early Iron Age is one of the most problematic archaeological periods in eastern Anatolia and the southern Caucasus (including the Urartian lands). The problems vary from terminology to chronology and it is not possible to discuss them here. As before, this period is also little known because of the limited extent of systematic excavations. Earlier and more recent excavations and surveys have shown that there were new socio-cultural and political structures and units in this period.[52] These units were precursors of the Urartian state which was becoming established as the first central political structure (Fig. 8).

The traces of these tribes and chiefdoms, which would become the Urartian state, can be found in archaeological and written sources. The archaeological data come mostly from surveys conducted across eastern Anatolia, and partly from archaeological excavations in the Lake Van basin, the Urartian homeland. Unfortunately these excavations, particularly on the mounds, have not demonstrated strong cultural layers relating to that period; generally the layers are insignificant,

[48] Sagona 2004, 482–83, fig. 5.1.
[49] Özfırat 2009.
[50] Özfırat 2002b.
[51] Özfırat 2002a.
[52] For more details about this matter, see Erdem 2009, 62–71; 2018, 59–68.

Fig. 8. Tribes and principalities in the highlands: Late Bronze Age to Early Iron Age.

and do not present substantial architectural remains. Archaeologists who work in this area believe that changing settlement patterns are responsible for this situation. There was an elite class that held political power and lived in elevated and defensive locations where they erected fortresses. The ordinary people lived in small villages (mounds) on the plains surrounding these fortresses. These communities were of mobile pastoralists living in tribes. Cemeteries belonging to them have been found on the lower slopes surrounding the fortresses, mostly containing stone cist, chamber or *kurgan* graves. Various grave-goods were found – diverse pottery, metal (weapons, ornaments) and stone objects were found in the graves. Those containing the more luxurious grave-goods might have belonged to the chiefs and elite. These graves were clear evidence for socio-economic and political transformation in the highlands (Fig. 8).

As mentioned above, the Early Iron Age levels of the limited number of sites excavated in the Lake Van basin have shown very little by way of architectural remains. These, consisting of a number of mud-brick or wattle-and-daub walls, plastered floors and pits, do little to illuminate the dynamics of the Early Iron Age in the region,[53] and archaeologists working here interpret this state as an 'interruption of settled life'. The few cemeteries to have been excavated in the Lake Van basin have been more informative than the mounds. The excavations of Karagündüz,[54] Dilkaya,[55] Ernis-Evditepe[56] and Yoncatepe[57] Höyüks have presented considerable evidence. These necropoleis consisted mostly of chamber tombs containing collective burials, and grave-goods such as pottery and metal weapons, and are very significant for our understanding of the socio-political structures and transformations in the formation process of the Urartian state (Figs. 2 and 8).[58]

Many fortresses have been discovered during recent surveys of areas surrounding the basin, especially in the highland districts. Located in defensive and elevated positions, they have fortification walls consisting of cyclopean or semi-cyclopean masonry, unlike Urartian fortress walls. On their lower slopes vast graveyards have been discovered. In the last three decades hundreds of fortresses (and graveyards) have been identified in Urartian territory by surveys undertaken in the Van, Muş and Ağrı provinces. Among them, Uncular and Keçikrıan in the Van, Marduk in the Muş and Kancıklı in the Ağrı region are distinguished by their finds, dimensions and fortification walls.[59] Although similar fortresses

[53] Sevin 2004a.
[54] Sevin 2003.
[55] Çilingiroğlu 1991.
[56] Sevin 2004b.
[57] Belli and Konyar 2000.
[58] Sevin 2004b.
[59] Belli and Konyar 2003.

have been found in surveys on the Erzurum-Kars high plateau,[60] they have received no systematic excavation. Thus we lack detailed knowledge about them or the processes that brought them into existence (Fig. 8).

The Upper Euphrates valley, being the internal sphere of Urartian political and cultural influence, presents a slightly different picture. This region, which was under the control of the Hittite state in the Late Bronze Age, still displayed elements of Hittite culture and settled existence during the transition period from Late Bronze Age to Early Iron Age. In the Early Iron Age, the traditions and general structure changed radically: Hittite elements had been eradicated, settled life had declined and local factors began to stand out. The archaeological evidence of this process can be followed on key sites in the region that were excavated during the Keban Project, especially at Norşuntepe, Tepecik and Korucutepe (Fig. 2).[61]

Some relevant archaeological data has come from the hilly Hakkâri region located to the south of Lake Van (questions are still posed as to whether this area lay within the boundaries of Urartu or not). In recent years graves and stone steles have been discovered in this region; these have yielded important information relating to the pre-Urartian period of eastern Anatolia. Similarly the chamber tombs of the Hakkari region, which have been shown to contain striking grave-goods, have become conspicuous because of their profusely decorated stone steles (known as Hakkari steles in Anatolian archaeology. Those who work on them suggest that they might have been associated with the steppes culture of Eurasia and probably belonged to chieftains and family members of nomadic or semi-nomadic pastoral groups in the region (Fig. 8).[62]

The general situation described above is more or less valid for the southern Caucasus (Armenia and Nakhchivan, Araxes valley and Lake Sevan basin) and north-western Iran (Lake Urmia basin), both of which include Urartian lands. This Late Bronze to Early Iron Age period is known locally in Nakhchivan and Azerbaijan as the 'Hocalı-Gedebey cultural process'. Archaeological evidence for it derives particularly from the necropoleis of Kolanı and Şahtahtı, where *kurgan*-type graves were still relatively widespread alongside cist-graves and chamber tombs.[63] The key site in north-western Iran for this period is Hasanlu. Its Early Iron Age levels are well stratified and present prominent architectural remains.[64] Apart from Hasanlu, excavations on the sites and necropoleis of Dinkha Tepe, Geoy Tepe, Haftavan Tepe, Yanık Tepe and Marlik Tepe displayed remarkable results relating to the pre-Urartian period of the Lake Urmia

[60] Işıklı and Can 2008.
[61] Bartl 2001.
[62] Sevin 2005.
[63] Bakhshaliyev and Marro 2009, 25–29.
[64] Muscarella 1994.

basin. Finally, recent archaeological projects on the Aragats and Tsakhovit plains in Armenia, encompassing Urartian lands, have been outstanding: excavations at Horom, Artik, Lchashen, Lori-berd and Metsamor fortresses and necropoleis have produced similar evidence concerning this period. The excavators have designated this process as 'early state formation' or 'Early socio-political complexes process' in the light of data from these excavations. According to them, the formation of the Urartian state occurred in this region. The model which they present reveals a pattern of fortresses inhabited by the elite, located on hilltops, and villages on mounds located on the lowlands and plains where the ordinary people lived alongside their vast necropoleis.[65] This pattern is very similar to that mentioned above for eastern Anatolia and surrounding areas.

Contemporary Assyrian inscriptions lift some of the shadows over this period. From the 13th century BC, they begin to mention the principalities which would eventually become the Urartian state, and thus we can learn the names of some of them, such as Uruadri and Nairi.[66]

Excavations and surveys conducted across eastern Anatolian and neighbouring areas, as well limited written sources and the artefacts from illegal excavations held in regional museums combine to further our knowledge of the Urartian state. However, the main factors and reasons for its establishment are still unknown. To understand the details and dynamics of this formation period requires more systematic and regional research across the Land of Urartu.

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[65] Badalyan *et al*. 2003.

[66] Çilingiroğlu 2001; Özfırat 2018; Guarducci 2019.

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HISTORICAL LIGHT ON THE KINGDOM OF URARTU

Charles BURNEY

Abstract

The challenge for writing this chapter, apart from the timespan, was not so much the amount of written material as its narrow range, lacking the colourful detail found in some Assyrian inscriptions. The history of Urartu is traced from its earliest beginnings, through to its downfall and aftermath. The kingdom of Urartu was first established by Sarduri I, as seen at his structure at the foot of Van Fortress, the so-called Sardursburg. The following three reigns saw continuing campaigns and military expansion, notably in the Urmia region and the north, in Transcaucasia, where expansion continued under Rusa I. The reign of Rusa II in the 7th century BC saw limited campaigning though an unsurpassed building programme extending across the kingdom. The paucity of inscriptions is frustrating. A traditional view of Urartian chronology in the final years is followed, against the prevailing opinion in the Munich symposium of 2007. This chapter closes with reference to the Early Iron Age background and to the ethnic context.

Known until the 19th century mainly from the Old Testament, as the mountains or kingdom of Ararat, and luring eccentrics seeking to find Noah's Ark, one historical reference to Urartu is found in *Jeremiah* 51:23. This happens to be just about Babylon. Another reference (*2 Kings* 19:37) recounts the flight of the assassins of Sennacherib to the land of Ararat. Apart from a few references in Strabo's *Geography*, the story of the areas surrounding Lake Van and Lake Urmia after the end of Urartu lapses into prehistory. Moses of Khorene, the Armenian historian, fancifully described one of the rock-cut tombs in the south side of the great 'camel's back' of the Van Citadel (Van Kalesi) as the marriage chamber of Semiramis.

Assyrian records narrate not only campaigns but also points of geography and economy. The Urartian records, in contrast, are for the most part lacking in background detail. They do, however, list lands and towns conquered and booty carried off, not least the numbers of men, women and boys: no separate category is recorded for girls.[1]

[1] Çilingiroğlu 1983.

Most of the known Urartian inscriptions are carved on bedrock or masonry. Only a very few clay tablets have been recovered. While negative evidence should not be given undue weight, it is noteworthy that there is no hint of a tradition of writing on wood, as in the 2nd millennium BC among the Hittites.[2]

Whatever the details, this was the time when Urartu emerged into the light of history, under a ruler, Arame, whose name has been compared with Erimena, an obscure figure in the 7th century BC, though such a comparison seems unrelated to the evidence. Erimena will be mentioned later. Little is known of Arame, who lacks a patronymic, and who may therefore have emerged from one of the clans of Nairi, perhaps the son of one of the 'kings' of Nairi mentioned in the Assyrian annals.[3] In spite of the wealth possessed by Arame, as mentioned by Shalmaneser III, it seems that he was unable to found a dynasty, for the next ruler was Sarduri I son of Lutipri (*ca.* 830–820 BC). The name of the latter resembles that of Lapturi, a minor chieftain defeated by Assurnasirpal II (884–859 BC):[4] these can hardly have been the same man, though perhaps father and son. Sarduri I made his power base at Tushpa (Van), building a massive structure at the foot of a mile-long rock ridge. It seems that in his short reign this king did not have time to build all along this ridge, now nicknamed 'the camel's back'. The function of this structure, now known as the Sardursburg, has been debated: a jetty, a temple or a defensive work protecting the approach to the summit? My slight preference is for the first, bearing in mind the higher level of Lake Van, the Upper Sea of Nairi.[5] This higher level is surely suggested by the size and weight of some of the blocks, 30 or 40 tons and over 5 cubic metres, transportable only by water, from Alniu, possibly near Erciş on the north-east shore of Lake Van. A more probable location, associated with an early quarry, lies south of Van near Edremit.

It has been suggested that Urartu was, at least indirectly, an Assyrian creation. While there are points supporting this idea, nevertheless the balance of evidence is surely against. Assyrian influence is indeed apparent stylistically on metalwork, while the inscriptions on the Sardursburg demonstrate the use of the cuneiform script and the Assyrian language. But the limited impact of Assyria is shown by the use of Urartian in subsequent royal inscriptions. The presentation of royalty in the royal titulary does nevertheless demonstrate the use of Assyrian models.

[2] Waal 2011.
[3] *ARAB* I, 144, 165.
[4] *ARAB* I, 447.
[5] *ARAB* I, 236.

A most significant pointer to the early development of Urartu is provided by the Kelishin stele, with parallel texts in Urartian and Assyrian, facing east and west respectively.[6] This stands in one of the passes through the mountains now forming the frontier between Iraq and Iran, as previously that between the Ottoman empire and Safavid and Qajar Persia. This stele presents something of a puzzle, recording as it does a pilgrimage by Ishpuini, son and successor of Sarduri, accompanied by his son Minua (previously vocalised as Menua). This coregency can be dated *ca*. 820–810 BC. No military action is recorded. This pilgrimage to a highly venerated religious centre shows that Ishpuini decided, either before arriving at Musasir, known to the Urartians as Ardini, or while there to make Haldi the leading god of the Urartian pantheon.[7] This was presumably before the carving of Mehr Kapisi, the list of the pantheon with the sacrifices due to each deity, on a rock now in the outskirts of modern Van.[8] The importance attached to the shrine of Musasir (Ardini), probably located at the village of Mudjesir near Rowanduz, seems to imply that the new dynasty had roots in or south of the Urmia basin rather than in the region of Lake Van. Unlike eastern Anatolia, where settled communities appear absent for centuries from the early 2nd millennium BC, a more sophisticated economy prevailed in Iranian Azerbaijan, especially west and south of Lake Urmia (the Lower Sea). The significant sites are Haftavan in the Salmas plain, Geoy Tepe near Urumiyeh (erstwhile Rezaiyeh) and Hasanlu in the Solduz plain, just south of the lake, as well as Dinkha Tepe near Ushnu, 30 km miles west of Hasanlu.

It is Hasanlu which is relevant to the establishment of Urartian control in and beyond the Urmia basin.[9] It was Hasanlu IV (Iron II in the American terminology) which formed the most prosperous period, relatively straightforward to excavate, with the firm floors of its burnt temples. Ample radiocarbon dates indicate a destruction *ca*. 800 BC.[10] No Urartian artefacts were found; but it is generally agreed that this was the work of an Urartian force, vividly illustrated by the excavation of the famous gold bowl, squashed beneath the body of a looter killed by the roof collapsing on top of him. This bowl probably dates two or three centuries earlier. Yet its iconography – with which I, as the one person allowed to draw it from the original rather than from photographs, remain familiar – does most probably indicate Hurrian antecedents. A procession of three deities is led by a god in a chariot drawn by

[6] Benedict 1961; *UKN* 19.
[7] Burney 1993.
[8] Salvini 1994.
[9] Salvini 1993.
[10] Medveskaya 1988; Dyson and Muscarella 1989.

a bull from whose mouth flows water. The bull is associated with Teisheba, the storm god and the second in the Urartian pantheon, after Haldi. This is the orthodox view, aligning with the linguistic evidence of a common proto-Hurrian origin for both Hurrian and Urartian. It fits with evidence from metal-work and sculpture in Urartu. Altogether less orthodox is the kite that I flew in one article suggesting a possible identification with Indra, the Indo-Aryan god, likewise associated with a bull.[11] Let us bear in mind the Indo-European ancestry of the Iranian immigrants arriving in the Iron I period (Hasanlu V) even if these were a minority absorbed by the indigenous population.[12] Ishpuini and his son Minua led a campaign against the land of Barshua and the city of Meishta, plausibly identified with Hasanlu. This indicates a date for the destruction of Hasanlu rather before 800 BC. If the Solduz plain did indeed lie in the land of Barshua/Parshua, this suggests a mixed population, not purely Mannean but including Iranian newcomers. Their impact on the material culture is unclear, except for Iron I pottery, clearly exemplified in Hasanlu V.

The influence of Ishpuini on the whole character of Urartian civilisation is perhaps most clearly discernible in the great rock inscription of Mehr Kapisi, with no fewer than 79 entries: the rank of each divinity is indicated by the nature and scale of their respective sacrifices.[13] By far the largest went to Haldi, 17 bulls and 34 sheep; and the same ratio applied to Teisheba, with just six bulls and 12 sheep; and to the sun god Shivini four bulls and eight sheep. The many subsequent divinities were given one bull and two sheep. Goddesses were allotted cows, Warubani – the consort of Haldi, known to the Assyrians as Bagbartu – received the modest offering of just one cow and one sheep. This suggests a strongly patriarchal society in Urartu. Urartian syntax does not have genders, so that the clearest pointer to a goddess, if not otherwise proved, lies in the allocation of cows rather than bulls for sacrifice, carried out on the platform below the inscription.

While Ishpuini had campaigned in the east and to a limited extent in the north-east, one senses that his legacy lay largely in the state pantheon and the character of the monarchy, though the names of several of the minor deities give evidence of association with lands just north-east of Lake Van or further north or in the Urmia region. It was his son Minua whose reign (*ca*. 810–786 BC) saw expansion of the kingdom on all fronts, as attested by inscriptions in situ. In the west this was the only evidence; but elsewhere archaeological data come into play. A hint that Minua had turned his attention from the east, now secured,

[11] Burney 2005.
[12] Young 1967.
[13] Salvini 1994.

to the north is implied by the great fortress of Anzavurtepe/Aznavurtepe near Patnos, on the natural route north-west from Lake Van.[14] Here surface remains showed an extensive enclosure with a sunken area very probably Urartian. A series of bastions measuring 8 × 9 m was linked by a curtain wall, maybe unique in Urartian military architecture. This large area could well have housed the horses for the cavalry units of the army, mustered here for the campaigns to the north-west, against the land of Diauehi. It was natural for the writer, on the surface evidence of perimeter walls ascending some 300 m and a structure on the summit, to assume that this was a standard citadel. Not till the excavations by Kemal Balkan was a temple of the distinctive square plan with corner buttresses exposed, evidently a development of Minua's reign, to which can be ascribed the slightly earlier temple at Upper Anzaf, 15 km from Van, along the route running east towards the present-day frontier with Iran.[15] This temple at Aznavurtepe stood on the summit, graced with mural decoration and, more significantly, with the only known annals inscription of Minua. Could this mean that the centre of government had been transferred from Tushpa? Probably not, yet clearly this was a major base for the kingdom, if only in war.

Some 100 inscriptions have been left by Minua, many of which are very short, including records of building works. It would be a mistake to believe that most Urartian inscriptions recount campaigns with territory and booty captured: this information is to be found especially in royal annals. Half of the smaller inscriptions are devoted to standardised curses on those damaging or removing an inscription. That the written word was conceived as spoken from the stone or in a few examples from the bronze is demonstrated by the introductory words 'Minua speaks…'. The invocation of Haldi, Teisheba or Shivini added weight to the curse. The planting of gardens, orchards or vineyards came only after the building of temples and construction of irrigation canals as praiseworthy achievements. Nevertheless it was of success on campaign that the kings of Urartu were most proud. The first records of military successes came with the coregency of Ishpuini with his son Minua, the main thrusts being to east and north-east. Minua continued involvement with the Urmia region; but his attention largely turned north-west, to the kingdom of Diauehi around present-day Erzurum, rich in minerals and in livestock and human booty. To the west the conquest of Sebeteria, at or near Palu, is recorded, with mention also of Hate (North Syria) and Tsupani, along with Melitea, undoubtedly to be equated with Milid/Mildia/Melitene/ and Eski Malatya (Arslantepe). Here the Upper Euphrates formed the natural frontier

[14] Balkan 1960; Burney and Lawson 1960.
[15] Belli 1999.

both politically and archaeologically, Urartian pottery being found east of the river and Alishar IV painted pottery to the west. Such frontiers for material culture are rare. Eastern campaigns were largely against the Mannean land (Mana).

The peaceful activities of Minua were recorded with as much pride as his military victories and resultant booty. Outstanding was the construction of the Minua canal (Samiram Su) over 50 km long, from the Hosap valley south-east of Van to the fertile ground just south of Tushpa (Van Kalesi). This brought water for irrigating the fields and presumably drinking water too. Associated with these canals, including one in the Muradiye plain and another recorded at Ada near Malazgirt, were dams, normally built at high altitudes.[16] The earliest of these, the Süphan dam dated by inscriptions to the reign of Minua, stood at 2400 m, and supplied water to the plain of Muradiye at the north-east corner of Lake Van, serving the major fortress of Körzüt (Arapzengi 'the rich ruin').[17] Near the Minua canal the king planted a vineyard as a gift to his queen Tariria, with terraces elsewhere probably for vines; and at Bostankaya, a minor fortress not far from Malazgirt, with traces of a significant structure beneath the rock, Minua left an inscription describing a wine store. Here the ledges cut into the rock gave it the name 'garden rock'.[18] Subsequent kings of Urartu demonstrated a comparable interest in horticulture. Orchards also were popular.

* * *

After Minua (810–786 BC) came his son Argishti I (786–764 BC), to be reckoned the second of the most successful reigns in the history of Urartu. Argishti I campaigned for seven successive years against Mana, east and south-east of Lake Urmia, in one inscription described as a mountainous land.[19] Here, as elsewhere, the necessity for repeated attacks suggests that each had short-lived success. This was largely owing to the need of the attacking force to return each time for the winter. In the west, Hilaruada king of Hate (Hatti) and the city of Melitea (Malatya) was defeated, only to surface 25 years later and to be defeated by the next king of Urartu, Sarduri II.

The principal achievements of Argishti I were in the north, centred on the Yerevan plain, Aza, described as an enemy land and also as a wilderness with few inhabitants and no fertility.[20] He was nevertheless able to secure this as

[16] Belli 1994.
[17] Burney 1957; Basgelen and Payne 2009; *UKN* 67.
[18] Burney 1957; Burney and Lawson 1960; *UKN* 79.
[19] *UKN* 127.III, 127.IV–V.
[20] *UKN* 137.

territory under Urartian control until the fall of the kingdom. Six rock inscriptions record campaigns in the north, the northernmost being at Ortakent, just 20 km south of the Georgian frontier.[21] Security of the annexation of Aza was reinforced by the foundation of two major centres, Erebuni (Yerevan) and, some distance to the west, Argishtihinili (Armavir). It is in the vicinity of the latter that at least four irrigation canals were established, as well as a garden and orchard. The importance of the cereal harvest is underlined by references to granaries, one of which had a capacity of 10,000 measures of corn. Granaries and other storehouses underpinned the Urartian economy.[22]

Prisoners of war, classed as men, women and boys, with no separate category for girls, were, as a matter of routine, taken off to Urartu. One assumes that it was the old and sick who were left behind or perhaps among those killed, alongside likely troublemakers. It seems clear that the kings of Biainili-Urartu believed that the population needed to be increased, no doubt owing to the requirement for labour to bring in the harvest or tend the livestock in the campaigning season from spring to early autumn, with so many men away in the army. The numerous construction programmes also demanded an ample labour force. One significant inscription of Argishti I records the deportation from Hate (North Syria) of 6600 to the land of Aza in the north.[23] The motives for this might have been twofold: to import people better experienced than the locals in agriculture; and to add a contingent who, surrounded by potentially hostile local inhabitants, would of necessity look to the government for support. Much the same applied to the Hittite empire in Central Anatolia in the later 2nd millennium BC.

Argishti I returned to the scene of campaigns by Minua, to the kingdom of Diauehi in the Erzurum region, bringing home not only the usual human and animal booty but also large quantities of gold, silver and copper. The king of Diauehi and subordinate chiefs were spared, against the agreement to pay tribute. This success was reinforced by the appointment of four governors, one of the few references in the Urartian texts to such a step. Two copies of the annals for this reign are found at Van, the better known being carved on the rock of Van Kalesi, immediately beside the entrance to the royal tomb. This was one of the many inscriptions copied meticulously by F.E. Schulz in 1827–29, probably all the more accurately for the inscriptions not having yet been deciphered, so that he could not have had ideas about their translation. This inscription is very sharply preserved, cut as it is in the hard crystalline limestone.

[21] *UKN* 266.
[22] *UKN* 139.
[23] *UKN* 127 col. 2.

The next king of Urartu was Sarduri II (764–730 BC), who continued the policy of territorial expansion, while also having to campaign in lands previously attacked, including Etiuhi in the north with surrounding areas. References to capture and destruction of numerous 'cities' and fortresses clearly reveal the exaggerated tone of the campaign narratives. New territories recorded are Kulha (Colchis) beside the Black Sea and Qumaha (Commagene) in the west. In Kulha he ravaged the land, deporting the inhabitants to Biainili – those who had been spared – and in the royal city of Ildamusha setting up an inscription and preparing a stamp-seal of iron.[24] In the Ararat plain (Aza) he discovered storehouses, some two generations old and built to be hidden from invaders. This is quite significant, implying that the rather standard reference to finding the land a wilderness should be taken with a pinch of salt. Aza seems to have been a fairly prosperous land before the Urartian occupation.[25]

In the west Sarduri reached territory never visited by his predecessors, the land of Qumahahali (Kummuhi, Commagene), across the Euphrates and ruled by Kushtashpili. Here the usual process was followed: abject submission, accepted in return for heavy tribute. In this case '40 *minas* of gold, 800 *minas* of silver, 3000 articles of clothing, 2000 copper shields, 1535 copper bowls…'.[26] It might have been better for Urartu if Sarduri II had not crossed the Euphrates, thus menacing all north Syria, because at that very time Assyria was emerging from a generation or longer of weakness. A new ruler, Tiglath-pileser III (744–727 BC), had seized the throne, reasserting Assyrian power in Babylonia and determined to restore access to the Mediterranean. This was threatened by Sarduri II's incursion into Commagene. Meanwhile the minor principalities of the region, including Milid (Malatya), Qumaha (Commagene) and Arpad, near Aleppo – seeing the success of Sarduri II and probably assuming the continued weakness of Assyria – rallied to the support of Sarduri II. But this coalition of ill-coordinated forces proved no match for the disciplined Assyrian army led by a vigorous ruler. It is most unfortunate that the annals of Tiglath-pileser III (the Pul of the Old Testament) are in such a fragmentary condition, the stone slabs having been used as a quarry by Esarhaddon (681–669 BC) for his palace. Sarduri II seems, if we accept the Assyrian narrative, to have fled ignominiously from the battlefield at Kishtan and Halpi, near the Euphrates.[27] He was pursued upstream along the west bank of the river, as far as the crossing, described as at his frontier and near his rock inscription of Izolu, the most westerly of all Urartian inscriptions.[28]

[24] *UKN* 155D.
[25] *UKN* 142.
[26] *UKN* 155E.
[27] *ARAB* I, 785.
[28] van Loon 1974; *UKN* 158.

The last years of his reign must have seen Sarduri II clinging to power. Evidently there was no serious rival for the throne, or none in the surviving records. In 735 BC, Tiglath-pileser III marched into the heart of Urartu, presumably up the valley of the Arsania (southern Euphrates), right to Tushpa (Van), where he set up a victory stele, very possibly in the city at the foot of the south precipice of Van Kalesi:[29] if so, it would have been beneath the ruins of the old Turkish city destroyed in World War I. The high water level here, however, militates against this suggestion. Perhaps this stele was set up on the north side, doubtless sited to be in full view of the garrison above. It is not surprising that no attempt was made to storm the citadel. It seems, however, rather strange that the Assyrians left the great open-air shrine of Sarduri, now known as the Analıkız, untouched. There was nothing there for them to plunder! Yet here was set up a record of an unbelievably large number of soldiers and their weapons, along with livestock, barley and wine.[30] It is quite impossible to believe that this narrates a futile sacrifice of the resources of the kingdom. Rather does it indicate that at the start of his reign Sarduri II dedicated to the god Haldi, as a pledge of his devotion, all that he possessed and controlled. It may not be certain how robust was this loyalty to the head of the pantheon in the face of successive defeats over the following reigns. At the accession of Sarduri II Urartu was at the zenith of its power and prosperity. The Analıkız was unfortunately badly vandalised at the end of World War I; but at least the excavations, conducted during the Russian occupation of Van, managed the recording of the lengthy inscriptions on steles and niches in the rock.

When an autocratic ruler is defeated, unrest and a *coup d'état* are only to be expected. The Urartian monarchy was no exception. In one generation Urartu suffered four serious defeats: the attack on Tushpa by Tiglath-pileser III (735 BC); the eighth campaign of Sargon II (714 BC); and the defeats by the Cimmerians in the north (713 and 707 BC). It is not known exactly what happened at the end of Sarduri II's reign, but some speculation seems justifiable. In Sargon's letter to the god Assur he mentions in juxtaposition Arbu, the city of the father's house of Ursa (Rusa), and Riar, the city of Ishtarduri (Sarduri).[31] This rather implies two separate branches of the Urartian royal family: that of Sarduri would surely have claimed seniority. It may be objected that Rusa I styled himself 'son of Sarduri'; yet the absence of a patronymic would have been tantamount to admission of usurpation of the throne. Political prudence would have dictated this titulary. A vivid sidelight is cast by Sargon's reference, in the long list of booty from Musasir, to a statue of Ursa on which was engraved the inscription: 'With my two horses and one charioteer my hand

[29] *ARAB* I, 785.
[30] *UKN* 155G.
[31] *ARAB* II, 165; Thureau-Dangin 1912.

attained to the kingdom of Urartu'.[32] This appears as a clear statement of his usurpation of the throne. That the Assyrian sources do not dwell on this can be explained by the fact that Sargon II was himself a usurper, taking the name of 'true king'.

Rusa son of Sarduri (Rusa I) campaigned successfully north of the Ararat plain (Aza), penetrating beyond Lake Sevan, in territory 2000 m above sea level, where the lake is to be found frozen in April. It was, however, perhaps the Urartian involvement with Ardini (Musasir) that provoked Sargon II to attack Urartu.

Urzana, king of Musasir, came to act like a double agent, switching from Urartu to Assyria and back again. The Topzawa stele, another bilingual inscription, was erected not far from Musasir. It recounts the installation of Urzana as ruler of Musasir, clearly as a vassal of Rusa I.[33] He presented to Rusa I some military personnel and battle chariots of a design only he possessed, which he deployed against 'the cities of Assyria', inflicting heavy casualties. This was indeed provocative behaviour.

In 1912 Francois Thureau-Dangin published the remarkably detailed account of the eighth campaign of Sargon, with his interpretation of the historical geography.[34] This has been a controversial topic for decades. The writer was early on attracted to the narrative of fortresses along the 'sea', which seemed to fit with the locations of fortresses along the north shore of Lake Van, more numerous than those along the west shore of Lake Urmia. The argument that going round both lakes would make an implausibly long march for Sargon II's troops, whom he described as weary before their decisive victory over the Urartian army on Mt Uaush (Mt Sahand), is hardly convincing, when compared with the distances covered by Shalmaneser III, particularly in the final campaign of his 31st year, led by Daian-Assur, his field-marshal (*turtan*), covering Hubushkia, Musasir, Gilzanu and Namri.[35] Shalmaneser III also covered much ground in his third campaign.[36] Nevertheless I have rather reluctantly come to accept the majority verdict: that Sargon went only round Lake Urmia, owing to the details of his detour to the sack of Musasir, having sent most of his troops back to Assyria. If there had been any murmurs of disaffection, he was not going to admit this. The lack of any reference to Tushpa (Assyrian: Turushpa) as being on the Assyrian march also militates against the Thureau-Dangin route.

[32] *ARAB* II, 173; Thureau-Dangin 1912.
[33] *UKN* 264; Pecorella and Salvini 1984.
[34] Thureau-Dangin 1912.
[35] *ARAB* I, 588.
[36] Russell 1984.

Sargon's army on departure from Nimrud comprised archers, infantry armed with spears and short swords, cavalry, chariotry, sappers and pioneer troops equipped with axes and picks, with supply column of horses and donkeys bringing provisions and materials for making camp and production of weapons. Whatever the morale of the majority of the Assyrian army, Sargon could rely on his bodyguard of some 1000 men, while Rusa had only 260 men in his bodyguard. Moreover, there was a weak junction with the troops of his ally, Metatti of Zikirtu, of which Sargon took full advantage.[37] It is hard not to regard the Urartian army as less disciplined than the Assyrian. But the strength of Urartu lay in its physical geography and the ability to retreat into the highlands, removing treasures out of reach of the enemy.

Sargon's account of Rusa's suicide can almost certainly not be taken at face value. Was it an indirect reference to a palace coup? This cannot be the case, given that the most widely accepted date for the defeat of Rusa I by the Cimmerians is 713 BC. I find the suggestion that Erimena was active at this time hardly plausible, whatever the support for this theory. It seems more straightforward to assume that it was Rusa I, son of Sarduri, who, having ventured dangerously far north of Lake Sevan, had provoked the Cimmerians. Then, after Sargon's attack in 714 BC, Rusa again marched north, perhaps finding the Cimmerian forces further south than before. We rely on letters sent by Assyrian spies from within Urartu to the crown prince Sennacherib, who forwarded them to his father in Assyria. Several letters mention a heavy defeat by the Cimmerians, the killing of up to 11 governors, the capture of the *turtan* and the flight of the king. The name of this king is not recorded; but, no doubt in the general confusion, his son Melartua was made king. If it was he, the king arrived back in Tushpa. There he confronted a serious conspiracy among palace officials and the bureaucracy, 100 being interrogated, then dragged out and killed, a few others being spared, perhaps as being close to the monarchy.

Melartua is no more heard of, the next clearly attested Urartian king being Argishti, son of Rusa (Argishti II), whose accession came in 713 BC, but the date of whose death is not known. One solution of this puzzle is to invoke the custom of the assumption by a new king of an official or throne name, making Melartua and Argishti one and the same. Rusa son of Argishti (Rusa II) was apparently first named Yaya. Be that as it may, the Urartian army suffered a second defeat at the hands of the Cimmerians (707 BC), who then began moving westward, though earlier on having penetrated Urartian territory from Mana in the south-east. The lifting of the Cimmerian threat must have been a great relief to Urartu. It was, however in engaging this threat in the Taurus

[37] Blanchard Smith 1994.

range that Sargon II was killed (705 BC). It was fortunate for Assyria that there was a mature, experienced successor in the person of Sennacherib.

The reign of Argishti II seems to have been relatively undistinguished. With the Cimmerians to the north and the Assyrians to the south, the one clear sector for territorial expansion lay to the east. Ishpuini and Sarduri II had already campaigned in that direction. Argishti II left rock inscriptions at Razliq and Nashteban in East Azerbaijan, Iran. Razliq lies 20 km north of Sarab.[38] A third rock inscription was carved on a high mountain near Shisheh, a village north-east of Ahar. One reference is to the Urartians' reaching a river called Muna, possibly the Araxes.[39]

Nearer Tushpa, Argishti II has left his name in the district town of Erciş, on the north shore of Lake Van. Here two steles recorded with the customary pride the digging of a reservoir, with a canal flowing out of it to irrigate the previously uncultivated land, as well as by implication the planting of vineyards and orchards,[40] close to the vineyard established by his grandfather Sarduri II, recorded in a rock inscription overlooking the modern road along the north side of Lake Van.[41] A similar inscription was set up near Teishebaini (Karmir-Blur) by the next king, Rusa II.

A very different inscription records the king's firing an arrow 'before the forest of Gilurani, as far as the garden of Ishpilini, son of Batu at 950 *lokots* (distance)'. This was approximately 476 m. It is reminiscent of Minua's long jump on his horse Arsibi. Archers, along with chariotry, were among the key components of the Urartian army.[42]

* * *

Rusa II, son of Argishti II, was without doubt one of the greatest kings of Urartu, leaving an impressive architectural legacy. For some time this was seen as a reign essentially on the defensive, after the setbacks of the previous three reigns. Certainly it was a time of rapprochement with the old enemy Assyria; but this suited Assyria too, both states facing danger from the northern nomads, Cimmerians and Scyths. Indeed in Shupria, one of the buffer states between Assyria and Urartu, there were exchanges of prisoners between Esarhaddon and Rusa.[43] This was a time when the energies of Urartu were largely devoted to major building projects, five great fortresses being attribut-

[38] Itself 120 km east of Tabriz on the road to Ardebil and the Caspian Sea.
[39] *UKN* 137.
[40] *UKN* 275–276.
[41] *UKN* 167.
[42] *UKN* 277; Konakci and Basturk 2009.
[43] *ARAB* II, 606–607.

able to Rusa II. To describe him as a building megalomaniac, however, seems an unbalanced judgment: Minua, before him, had built four fortresses, though less widely located. There is a possibility that the resources of the kingdom were somewhat overstretched, though there is no proof of this. Certainly deportees were employed, as in the outer town of Ayanis, possibly the latest of the five fortresses.[44]

A determination to strengthen the hold on Aza, the Yerevan plain, one of the bread baskets of Urartu, is stressed by the building of Teishebaini (Karmir-Blur) on the outskirts of modern Yerevan, and probably the earliest of the five fortresses. Here the basement comprised numerous storerooms, demonstrating the economic and also the fiscal role of such centres. The status accorded to Teishebaini by Rusa II is underlined by the removal of many artefacts thither from neighbouring Erebuni (Arin-Berd), built by his great-great-grandfather Argishti I. The likely order of construction of Rusa II's five fortresses seems to be as follows: Karmir-Blur; Bastam (in Iran, north of Lake Urmia); Kef Kalesi (above Adilcevaz, on the north shore of Lake Van); Toprakkale (Van); and Ayanis (overlooking the east shore of Lake Van). It has been suggested that these centres imply an itinerant royal court, though it is hard to imagine the king being away from Tushpa through the long winter months. He was evidently responsible for administrative reforms, demonstrated by the introduction of clay tablets[45] and bullae, as well as seals and sealings. Some seals are inscribed in cuneiform and in hieroglyphs.

Rusa II was, however, capable of leading military campaigns, especially to the west, where he attacked Mushki, the eastern wing of the Phrygians, recorded four centuries earlier by Tiglath-pileser I, eliminating a threat to North Syria.[46] He also attacked Tablani, just possibly Tabal. If so, this would mark a penetration further west than by any earlier king of Urartu. Rusa II seems to have acted with a purpose, though for what reason it is impossible to be sure. One must bear in mind the belief of Classical sources that there was a link between the Phrygians and the Armenians, and that penetration into Urartu or its erstwhile territory may have begun before the final fall of the kingdom. Already this may have been realised as a threat by Rusa II. An alternative view sees Armenian groups infiltrating quite peacefully into Urartu, beyond the western provinces.

[44] Stone and Zimansky 2004.
[45] *UKN* 286.
[46] *UKN* 278; *ARAB* I, 221.

The state cult of Urartu is strikingly demonstrated by the splendidly preserved temple at Ayanis, in better condition than any other known temple. It is in the sanctuary, or cella, that the finest decoration is to be seen, on the alabaster podium, with its sacred trees and winged lions arranged in a regular decorative framework. Here Urartian art is to be seen at its finest, not found before the 7th century BC.[47] To the same period belongs the only over-life-size sculpture known in Urartu, the relief of a god standing on a bull and holding a cup and fircone. His headdress or crown is topped by a small solar emblem. His being flanked by spears resembling trees led me astray back in 1957, to identify this god as Haldi, whereas the bull indicates Teisheba, the storm god, or perhaps Shivini, the sun god and third in rank in the pantheon, a possibility strengthened by his evident youth, being portrayed as beardless. The most striking feature of this relief, portraying one of two figures facing each other, is the god's highly decorated robe, an example of the 'golden garments of the gods', surely representing brocade.[48] Other reliefs were repeated in the fortress of Kef Kalesi. It does seem that sculpture was hardly developed in Urartu before Rusa II. This exemplifies the flourishing of the civilisation late in its history. There is scant written record of textiles, woollen cloths and animal skins being mentioned in a tablet from Karmir-Blur.

The dearth of inscriptions of Rusa II is frustrating, even the long-repeated inscription on the temple at Ayanis (Rusahinili Eiduru-kai) having only brief historical content, as well as a number of words hard to translate. One explanation could centre on the introduction of clay tablets, of necessity much briefer than the customary inscriptions on stone.[49]

While the attribution of Toprakkale (Van) has been disputed, with several specialists now crediting it to Rusa II's successor, Rusa son of Erimena. As argued immediately below, I adhere to the attribution to Rusa son of Argishti (Rusa II). Though there is ample epigraphic proof that Rusa son of Erimena constructed a dam at Keşiş Gol and a canal to take water to Toprakkale, these works could have been carried out some years after the fortress was built.

These inscriptions, as well as tablets from Karmir-Blur and elsewhere, indicate that Rusa son of Erimena was far from inactive; but his reign may have been brief, less than a decade. If the synchronism of Assurbanipal of Assyria at 652 BC with Ursa (Rusa) of Urartu was with Rusa son of Erimena rather than Rusa II son of Argishti, then the dendrochronology for Ayanis could present a problem. The tree-ring data could, however, be adjusted from *ca.* 651 BC

[47] Çilingiroğlu 2001; 2012.
[48] Burney and Lawson 1958.
[49] *UKN* 286.

back to *ca*. 673 BC, fitting far more easily into the general historical evidence, and putting Ayanis higher in the sequence of Rusa II's building projects.[50]

Two points need to be made in connection with Rusa son of Erimena. First, there is no record of Erimena as king of Urartu. Yet here we see a man with the name of Rusa as king, in spite of his lowly parentage. This strongly suggests a *coup d'état*, with concern to claim legitimacy by adopting the name of the previous king. Did Rusa II die with no heir? Was any heir slain? At present there is no means of knowing, though there is no evidence of a collapse of the state. A decline in capacity of a granary built in the land of Aza under Rusa III, son of Erimena, to 15% of that of earlier Urartian granaries in the Araxes plain does, however, point to economic decline. A far more contentious point can be raised in connection with the name Erimena, the possibility that it could signify 'the Armenian'. Elements may have filtered in, quite peacefully, as far east as the Araxes plain, very possibly as prisoners of war or deportees. One such could have risen to prominence with the decline of Rusa II in old age; but that remains speculation.

With the death of Rusa III, the final decline had undoubtedly begun, with the brief reign of Sarduri, son of Rusa III, followed by Sarduri son of Sarduri, mentioned by Assurbanipal (646/642 BC), who claims to have been addressed by the king of Urartu as 'my lord', suggesting a reduction to the status of an Assyrian vassal. This is perhaps the latest reference to Urartu, apart from Jeremiah's reference, around 600 BC.

There has been much recent debate about the place of Rusa son of Erimena in Urartian history, as well as the date of the fall of Urartu. On the second matter, there is support for the dating of the fall of the Urartian state to the mid-7th century BC, the traditional dating being between 610 and 585 BC. The earlier date overlooks a synchronism of Assyrian records with Urartian (Assurbanipal with Sarduri son of Sarduri), though the implication of reduction to vassal status is a sign of general decline before the final fall. Then there is the reference by Jeremiah in the Old Testament.

If there is some agreement, not followed by this writer, on the abovementioned problems, there is little or none on the agents of the destruction of Biainili-Urartu – Scythians, Cimmerians, Medes, the Ummanmanda, Armenians? There is simply no conclusive evidence. Some see socketed arrowheads, especially those with a hook on the tang, as the Scythian signature. The Cimmerians had defeated both Urartu and soon afterwards Assyria, when Sargon II was killed (705 BC), before they moved further west. By the fall of Urartu the Cimmerians had moved beyond Urartian territory. The Scythians enjoyed

[50] Kuniholm and Newton 2001.

a 28-year rule in 'Upper Asia' (653–625 BC), south of Lake Urmia, and were still in the region an obstacle to the advance by Cyaxares into Central Anatolia. The Medes seem responsible for the fall of Tushpa. The Armenians can be dismissed as a military threat to Urartu, even though moving in after the fighting was over, almost certainly in some numbers. There remain the Ummanmanda, a name of not entirely certain meaning but probably signifying northern nomads. These may well have led the destruction of Urartu. Such nomads had occupied land adjoining Urartu since before the rise of the kingdom. In 1978 a survey in Iranian East Azerbaijan revealed a number of sites in the Meshkinshahr plain, south of the Lower Araxes, characterised by steles with parallels north of the Black Sea and datable to the Iron II period of Iran (*ca.* 1100–800 BC),[51] In similar tradition if not comparable designs are steles excavated in Hakkari province, many to be seen now in Van Museum.[52]

External influences on Urartu were by no means confined to those from Assyria, for in southern Transcaucasia fortresses datable before the imposition of Urartian rule, as well as some irrigation canals, demonstrate two phenomena which became characteristic of the Urartian kingdom.[53] The most probable channel of influence would have been through prisoners of war and deportees, whose numbers were so proudly recorded in royal inscriptions. These highlanders from around Tushpa could hardly have been justified in looking down on those from Etiuni and elsewhere in the north.

An epilogue to Urartian history may be discerned in the *Cyropedia* of Xenophon, less of a straightforward history than the *Anabasis*. It can, however, be assessed as containing a kernel of historical narrative. Here we see Armenian newcomers occupying the fertile lowlands, pushing the descendants of Urartu, the Alarodians, into the relatively barren hills – not that the lowlands around Van were that fertile. More promising territory for farmers lay in the plain of Yerevan, the former land of Aza so favoured by the kings of Biainili-Urartu. Roughly built strongholds at high altitudes, such as Kefirkale in the foothills of Mt Suphan, may have been refuges for Alarodians.[54] While the virtual disappearance of the Urartian population, apart from references to Alarodians, may seem puzzling, the character of ancient Near Eastern states with centralised authority and militaristic policy must be borne in mind. Of relevance is comparison with the Hittite state of the 2nd millennium BC. In both Urartu and Hatti there was a necessity to recruit labour both for farming

[51] Ingraham and Summers 1979.
[52] Sevin and Özfirat 2001.
[53] Smith 2012.
[54] Burney 1957.

and for building projects, to fill the gaps left by recruits called to serve on campaign. As in the outer town of Ayanis, these newcomers came from different lands: study of the animal bones excavated there revealed a preference for beef in every sector but one. There it was sheep bones that predominated, the associated pottery having close parallels in Assyria.[55] When it came to the final decline of Urartu, as indeed of Hatti, these incomers, themselves or their forebears forcibly recruited, would have been unlikely to feel loyalty to their gang-masters in disarray. Their overlords had ruled over a mixed population, some outside elements even being recruited to the army, as happened from the 3rd century AD in the Roman empire; and much earlier in Egypt Ramses II had recruited some Sherden.

This is the most likely scenario for the fall of Urartu, through the agency of outsiders, especially Scyths and Medes. Dissension in the royal dynasty may have been another factor. At Van itself there is a complete lacuna until the early 5th century BC, with the rock inscription of Xerxes inaccessibly high on the precipitous south side of Van Kalesi. An Achaemenid presence in the Van region is hard to detect, save only at Zernaki Tepe on a plateau by the north shore of Lake Van. At that extensive site Urartian, Achaemenid and Parthian or Sasanian phases are evident.[56]

Just as the end of Urartu is obscure, so the details of its origin are uncertain, how the Early Iron Age (*ca*. 1300–850 BC) merged into early Urartu. This can be detected at several of the forts attributable to the Early Iron Age, distributed in and beyond the Van region.[57] The evidence is principally in the masonry of the forts, sited on the top of rocky outcrops, with settlements and cemeteries on the lower slopes: the earlier walling comprises roughly dressed stones with gaps between; the later masonry, probably to be dated to the late 9th century BC and attributable to Minua, has stretches with better dressed masonry, undoubtedly Urartian. Irrigation works are a further indicator. Perhaps the outstanding site is Yoncatepe, 9 km south-east of Van, with a well preserved building on the flat summit, built of neat courses of small, flat stones. This hardly looks Urartian. Against this, however, the pottery from these sites has the appearance of being Urartian. Perhaps the safest solution is to attribute both building phases to the 9th century BC.[58]

[55] Stone and Zimansky 2004.
[56] Nylander 1965–66; Burney 1957; Burney and Lawson 1960.
[57] Belli and Konyar 2003.
[58] Belli and Konyar 2001.

In conclusion, I come to a point which could have been discussed at the beginning, namely, the ethnic background of the people of Urartu. Archaeologists, linguists, historians and anthropologists have inevitably all approached this and related topics from their own standpoint. It is now generally agreed that the Urartian language was not a direct descendant of Hurrian but like cousins, with a common Proto-Hurro-Urartian ancestor. The Urartian texts are too narrow in compass to be compared with Hurrian (or indeed with Hittite) literature. Nor do we have evidence of Urartian music, save possibly by implication through bards and public feasts. Urartian art, ranging in scale from basalt reliefs to metalwork and glyptic designs, shows the clearest criteria for Hurrian identity. Setting the background to Urartu in the widest frame, the Hurrian homeland seems to have originated around the eastern Caucasus, perhaps just north of the mountains, whence they moved into eastern Anatolia in the early 4th millennium BC or perhaps earlier. The origins of the Indo-Europeans have been the focus of much debate on the Proto-Indo-European homeland, now commonly centred in the Pontic-Caspian region between the Dnieper and the Lower Volga and associated with the domestication of the horse.[59]

* * *

The whole field of Indo-European research was largely discredited for a generation after the fall of the Third Reich in 1945 and the disappearance of Himmler's Aryan propaganda. Ethnicity should be merged with cultural background, and discerning of Hurrian elements together with Indo-European in the background of Urartu. The two are incompatible only if the whole emphasis is linguistic.[60] History demonstrates several examples of a conquering minority imposing their language on the subjugated majority. This happened after the Seljuk victory at Malazgirt; and it seems likely to have occurred with the penetration, albeit less dramatic, of Armenians into Urartu in and after its final years. Thus, in spite of Xenophon's narrative in his *Cyropedia*, the Urartian population would have survived under Armenian rule and the imposition of an Indo-European language, Armenian, on the indigenous population, however mixed.

ADDENDUM

A large Urartian fortress has been found under the surface of Lake Van, just north-west of the harbour jetty near the city of Van. Also under the water are remains of a town of uncertain date, off Adilcevaz on the north-west shore of Lake Van.

[59] Mallory 1989.
[60] Burney 1997.

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THE ECONOMY OF THE URARTIAN KINGDOM

Ali Çifçi

Abstract

After an opening review and critique of Soviet and Western and Turkish scholars (some of whom were influenced by Marxism) and their interpretations of the socio-economic structure and nature of Urartian society, this chapter goes on to examine briefly the topography, hydrology, climate and ecology of the Urartian lands before turning to mainstays such as agriculture (increasingly important), animal husbandry and metallurgy, and trade and the spoils of war. A lengthy synthetic discussion then ensues within a framework of the three phases of socio-economic and political development identified by the author (expansionist, transitional and crisis) and the general trend to greater centralism. The discussion includes an examination of the Sarduri II's inscription of Hazine Kapısı/Analıkız at Van Kalesi and how particular terminology should be and has been interpreted.

Introduction

While the textual and archaeological evidence from Urartu and Assyria overwhelmingly suggests that the Urartian kingdom was formed by military force in the Lake Van basin of eastern Anatolia during the early decades of the 9th century BC, the political, administrative and economic structure of the Urartian kingdom as a whole has generally been less well studied (Fig. 1).[1] This work therefore aims to investigate the socio-economic organisation of the Urartian kingdom by examining this artefactual and written evidence, within the context of the geographical setting of Urartu.

Because the territory of the former Urartian kingdom is divided between the modern-day states of Turkey, Armenia and Iran, Urartian scholarship developed separately in each of these countries until the last decade of the 20th century. As a result, their different 'national' cultures influenced how they perceived Urartian archaeology and, in particular, the socio-economic aspects of the Urartian kingdom. However before making any remarks about the socio-economic organisation of Urartu, I would like to present a brief

[1] This study makes use of the latest publications of Urartian inscriptions, especially Mirjo Salvini's four-volume *CTU*.

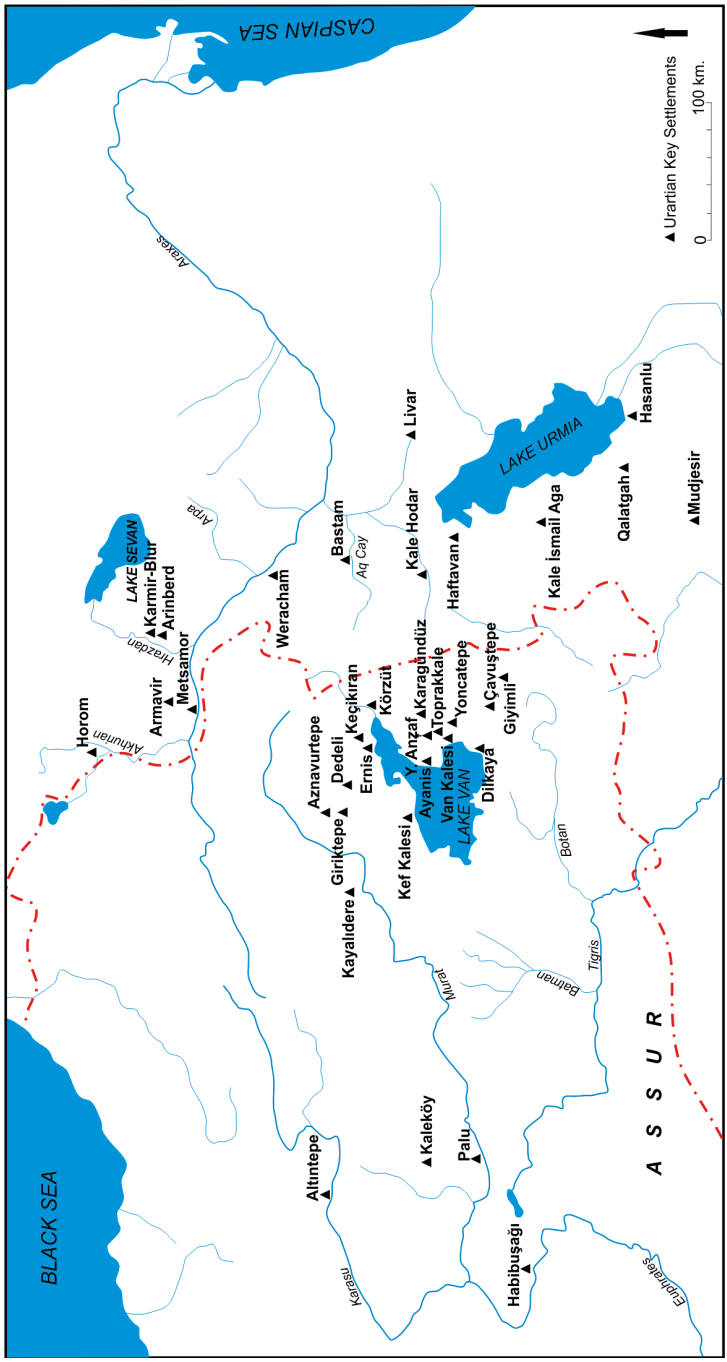

Fig. 1. Map of key settlements of the Urartian kingdom.

review of how Soviet-era archaeologists, Western and Turkish scholars viewed the socio-economic organisation of the Urartian kingdom. This is an important first step, since their theories and arguments have important implications for the interpretation of the nature of the Urartian economy.

Thanks to the discovery of large storage rooms at the site of Karmir-Blur, the economy of Urartu received great attention from Soviet-era archaeologists who subsequently examined its role in social and political change.[2] Giorgi Melikishvili[3] was the first to express an opinion on the socio-economic organisation of Urartu, and he argued that a central bureaucracy penetrated all levels of Urartian society, and that the king actively engaged in the organisation of the production and redistribution of resources. In his opinion, the large 'royal estates' founded by the Urartian rulers played a considerable role in the economic organisation, redistribution and storage of surplus goods, and the control of slave labour. However, it should be noted that Melikishvili's arguments were clearly influenced by Marxist ideology, which obviously occupied a dominant position amongst Soviet-era archaeologists and anthropologists.[4] However, this interpretation was questioned by Igor Diakonoff,[5] Vsevolod Sorokin[6] and Paul Zimansky.[7] Diakonoff and Sorokin objected to Melikishvili's argument regarding the king's ownership of large estates and questioned the exploitation of large numbers of slaves. Diakonoff[8] argued that in the majority of the centres of the Urartian kingdom, there was no 'royal economy' and even if there were, this was probably similar to the economies of communities who lived in large families or patriarchal clans that owned large tracts of agricultural land.

Instead, Diakonoff[9] offered a new model for the socio-economic study of Urartian society. This new model divided Urartian society into four social-economic categories and was arranged according to his interpretation of Sarduri II's inscription of A 9-3 VII: the top rank were the *shurele* who were made up of free upper classes, and were the more socially privileged native Urartians;[10] next, were the *hurâdinele*, people taken from conquered lands; then there were *urordele*, peasants who supplied the temples with labourers and agricultural products, and who were probably also liable for military and

[2] Melikishvili 1951; 1953; Diakonoff 1952; 1963; 1991a.
[3] Melikishvili 1951, 22–40; 1978, 39.
[4] Trigger 2008, 207–43.
[5] Diakonoff 1952; 1963, 63–65.
[6] Sorokin 1952.
[7] Zimansky 1985.
[8] Diakonoff 1963, 62.
[9] Diakonoff 1991a, 17.
[10] Diakonoff 1991a, 15, nos. 28, 30.

other public services; lastly, there were the *purâle* – slaves who were usually prisoners of war and who were used mainly as servants and workers in privileged households. In this model, the Urartian economy was concentrated in the hands of the *shurele*. This upper class supplied personnel for the Urartian army until Sarduri II ascended the throne, who subsequently reduced their military obligation.[11] In his interpretation Sarduri II freed the *shurele* from this early form of the military draft, and a new royal army was formed from the *hurâdinele*. Sarduri II also reduced the taxes levied on the *urordele*. The taxes were used for the maintenance of the army, and the reduction on taxes indicates an increase in the strength and growth of economic resources in terms of agricultural products and surplus (see below in the Discussion section for the relevant text of A 9-3 VII).

Diakonoff's class-based model of Urartian society was modified from his own model of ancient Near Eastern societies of the 3rd and 2nd millennia BC. He argued that in these societies the 'upper class' consisted of people who did not engage in productive work and exploited the labour of others. However, and most importantly, the members of this class managed the state economy.[12] The 'middle class' comprised agriculturalists and craftspeople, but they did not exploit the labour of others.[13] The members of this class also included landowning community members as well as those who owned conditional land. The 'lower class' consisted of people who owned no property and who were subject to 'extra-economic exploitation'.[14] Slaves also formed part of the lower class. In my opinion, it can be argued that Diakonoff's model was too general and did not recognise how the geography of individual regions shaped the socio-economic organisation of Near Eastern societies. Rather, Diakonoff sought to impose Marxist concepts of class onto the interpretation of Near Eastern societies.

However, scholars such as Oktay Belli[15] and M. Taner Tarhan,[16] who were influenced by Soviet Marxist scholars such as Melikishvili and Diakonoff, produced a series of articles examining the role of the Urartian central authority in the organisation and distribution of economic resources. In these papers, they suggested that the Urartian state was governed by a centralised government that dominated all parts of Urartian society. Tarhan argued that the economy was entirely organised by the state and all forms of production were

[11] Diakonoff 1991a, 17–21.
[12] Diakonoff 1991b, 39.
[13] Diakonoff 1991b, 39–40.
[14] Diakonoff 1991b, 40.
[15] Belli 1978; 1982, 188–190.
[16] Tarhan 1983; 1986, 287.

under state control.[17] However, as is the case with Marxist scholars of Urartian archaeology, Turkish scholars also ignored the possibility of regional variations that may have existed or temporal changes that might have occurred throughout the lifetime of the kingdom. In fact, archaeological and textual evidence from Urartu indicates that there were such changes during the lifetime of the Urartian kingdom.

Zimansky[18] argued that the theories presented by Russian scholars (especially those of Melikisvhili and Diakonoff) were not sufficient to explain the socio-economic structure of the kingdom. He proposed that the political and economic organisation of the Urartian kingdom was shaped by two main factors: the ever-present threat of invasion by the Assyrian army, and by the topography and climate of eastern Anatolia.[19] To protect its territory from Assyrian attack, the Urartian monarch developed a decentralised system. In Zimansky's view, the central bureaucracy penetrated all levels of Urartian society, but the productive and distributive activities remained decentralised.[20] However, the decentralised hypothesis relies heavily on the absence of written evidence of administrative or bureaucratic activities from Tushpa (Van Kalesi) and on the existence of such written evidence from sites such as Karmir-Blur, Bastam and Toprakkale. In this context, it should be noted that Van Kalesi was poorly excavated and most of the structure that remains from the Urartian period was mostly destroyed during the early 20th century. However, it should be noted that Zimansky recently altered his view of decentralisation, and points out that there may have been changes to the state structure during the reign Rusa son of Argishti in the 7th century BC.[21]

This critical synthesis of the research history of the Urartian kingdom reveals that the early engagement of Soviet scholars in Urartian archaeology was to have important implications for the interpretation of the nature of the Urartian economy for Turkish archaeologists such as Belli and Tarhan. On the one hand, Soviet scholars emphasised the political organisation of the Urartian kingdom as highly centralised, while on the other hand, Western scholars characterised a decentralised institutional organisation and stress the importance of trade to the state economy. However, there is new archaeological and textual evidence from Urartian territory that may help us to understand how the socio-economic structure of the kingdom was organised.

[17] Tarhan 1986, 396.
[18] Zimansky 1985, 3.
[19] Zimansky 1985, 3.
[20] Zimansky 1985, 32.
[21] Zimansky 2006, 267–75.

After this brief review of general scholarly opinion regarding the character of the socio-economic organisation of the Urartian kingdom I will briefly look at the ecology, physical geography and climate of eastern Anatolia, north-western Iran and Armenia. These factors played important roles in shaping the society and economy of highland communities and, in particular, agriculture and animal husbandry; the two most important economic sectors of the Urartian kingdom. I will then move on to present a review of the archaeological and textual evidence for agriculture, animal husbandry, trade and metallurgy. After assessing the economy and movement of commodities, and how the physical geography and climate of the Urartian territory impacted on these aspects of Urartian society, I will return to the monarch's role in administration and how his decision making affected the economy.

The Physical Environment

What was once the Urartian territory is now divided among the modern nation-states of Turkey, Armenia and Iran, and the adjoining highlands of the Zagros mountains in northern Iraq. The most distinctive features of the physical geography of the Urartian territory are the Great Ararat/Ağrı Dağ (5165 m) and Aragat (3925 m) mountains. There are a few major rivers that run through the Urartian highlands: Aras and Kura rivers which flow towards the Caspian Sea, and the Murat ($^{\text{Í}D}$*Arṣiani*) and Karasu rivers that run south and form the Euphrates ($^{\text{Í}D}$*Purana*) in the Elazığ/Araxes plain.[22] In the Lake Van basin, the average annual precipitation is 400 mm,[23] which is close to the annual rainfall in the Lake Sevan basin (rainfall fluctuates between 350 mm to 446 mm in the coastal zone and, 800 mm in the mountains surrounding the Sevan basin).[24] In the Lake Urmia basin, the annual precipitation fluctuates between 200 mm and 300 mm.[25] However, since the lake basins are surrounded by high mountains, these regions receive more rain and are relatively warm, in contrast to other parts of the Urartian territory.[26]

[22] Atalay and Mortan 1997, 312–13.
[23] Atalay and Mortan 1997, 467.
[24] Sayadyan 2002, 19–20.
[25] Eimanifar and Mohebbi 2007, 2; Golabian 2011, 367.
[26] Sayadyan 2002, 19–20; Saraçoğlu 1989, 451–54; Eimanifar and Mohebbi 2007, 2; Golabian 2011, 367.

Agricultural Activities of the Urartian Monarchy

Despite the high mountains and the continental climate of eastern Anatolia, Armenia and north-western Iran, there are still major agricultural areas around rivers, narrow valleys, plains and terraced hills.[27] Fertile land along the major river such as the Murat, Karasu and Araxes and their tributaries, are still very important areas for the cultivation of crops. There are also important agricultural areas in the lake basins of Van, Sevan and Urmia. However, it should be pointed out that, the waters of Lake Van and Urmia are not conducive to agriculture, but several rivers empty into these lakes and provide important water sources for the agricultural areas located around the lake basins.

The expansion of the boundaries of the Urartian kingdom, followed the construction of new cities or settlements in newly conquered lands. As in the other highland regions of eastern Anatolia, north-western Iran and Armenia, Urartian rulers claimed land around the Lake Van basin previously uncultivated, and transformed the landscape through the cultivation of arable crops, the planting of vineyards and orchards, and water facilities (see Table 1, Figs. 2 and 3). Archaeological and textual evidence from regions such as Lake Van, the Araxes, Murat and the Karasu river basins, indicates that in places like Pasinler, Iğdır, Ararat, Nakhichevan, Weracham and Qara Zia Eddin, (Fig. 4) and the upper reaches of the Murat river, the Urartians successfully managed to bring more land under cultivation and build water facilities to support the growing of crops.[28] There were also similar agricultural projects in the Aras river basin where the topography[29] is not a limiting factor for cultivation, despite big differences in the basin's elevation and annual precipitation. By contrast, the absence of such activities, both in archaeological and textual evidence, in regions such as the Lake Urmia basin or Elazığ and Erzurum, is noteworthy. However, agricultural activities in the Lake Urmia basin are detailed in some depth in the account of the Assyrian king Sargon II's eighth campaign in 714 BC against Rusa I. This textual evidence from the Assyrian kingdom helps us to reconstruct the historical geography of the region along with the agricultural activities of Urartian rulers. Sargon II states that in the city of Ulhu in Sangibute province, there were a number of water canals, constructed by Rusa, which brought water to orchards, vineyards and to the uncultivated fields:

[27] Saraçoğlu 1989; Atalay and Mortan 1997, 491.
[28] Çifçi 2017.
[29] Zimansky 1985, 22.

Table 1. Irrigation and Agricultural Works of Urartian Kings and their Locations.

King	Texts (*CTU*)	Irrigation Works	Agricultural projects	Location
Ishpuini				
	A 2-5	-	Vineyard/orchard	Zivistan/Edremit
	A 2-9A e B, A 2-9B	-	Vineyard/orchard	Karahan/Muradiye
	A 3-1	-	Vineyard/orchard	Meher Kapısı/Van
Minua				
	A 5A-1	-	Vineyard	Van
	A 5-11A-B	-	Vineyard/field Cultivation	Aznavurtepe/Patnos
	A 5-12 12A-D, A 5-13, A 5-14A-D, A 5-15A-E	Canal	-	Van
	A 5-16	Canal	-	Bekri/Muradiye
	A 5-17 Ro	Canal	-	Erciş
	A 5-20	Canal	-	Adalak/Malazgirt
	A 5-21	Canal	-	Hotanlı/Malazgirt
	A 5-22 Vo	Canal	-	Malazgirt
	A 5-23 Vo[a]	Canal	-	Akdamar/Van
	A 5-24 Vo	Canal	-	Karahan/Muradiye
	A 5-25 Vo	-	-	Patnos
	A 5-28, A 5-29 Ro, A 5-30 Ro	-	Vineyard/orchard	Karahan/Muradiye
	A 5-33	-	Vineyard/orchard	Güzak/Köşk
Argishti I				
	A 8-2 Ro, A 8-3 IV, A 8-3 V	Canal	-	Armavir
	A 8-15	Canal	-	Karakala/Armavir
	A 8-16[b]	Canal	Vineyard/orchard	Sardarabad/Armavir
Sarduri II				
	A 9-9	Canal	-	Ortadamla/Erciş-Patnos
	A 9-11	-	Vineyard	Karataş/Erçiş
	A 9-12	-	Vineyard	Armavir
	A 9-16	-	Vineyard/orchard/field cultivation	Armavir
	A 9-17	Canal	Vineyard/field cultivation	Çavuştepe

King	Texts (*CTU*)	Irrigation Works	Agricultural projects	Location
Argishti II				
	A 11-1 Ro; A 11-2 Vo	Canal/water reservoir	Vineyard/orchard/field cultivation	Erciş
Rusa II				
	A 14-1 Ro	Canal/water reservoir	Vineyard/orchard/field cultivation	Gövelek-Keşiş Göl/Van
	A 14-2	Canal/water reservoir	-	Savacık/Van
Rusa III				
	A 12-8	Canal	Vineyard/orchard/field cultivation	Ečmiadzin/Erevan
	A 12-9	-	Vineyard/orchard/field cultivation	Ayanis

Note: (a) The Akdamar inscription is not *in situ* and probably should be located in the Gevaş area, to the south-eastern shore of Lake Van basin. (b) The construction of more than one canal (4 $PA_5^{MEŠ}$). *Taramanili* (fountains) are not included in this table.

Fig. 2. A view of the Minua canal from Kadembastı Mevkii, Van.

> He made numberless channels lead off from its bed … … and irrigated the orchard. Its waste land, which from days of old … and made fruit grapes as abundant as the rain. Plane trees, exceedingly high (?), of the riches of his palace … … like forest, he made them cast their shadows over its plain, and in his uncultivated fields … … like god, he made its people raise their glad songs. 300 homers of seed lad, planted(?) in grain, he in (by) … the crop gave increased return of grain at the gathering. The ground of his uncultivated areas he made like a meadow, flooding it abundantly in springtime, (and) grass and pasture did not failed (cease), winter and summer, into stamping grounds (corals) for horses and herds he turned it. The camels in all of his submerged country he trained(?) and they pumped the water into ditches (*ARAB* II, 160).

It is clear from this account, that the province of Sangibatu was one of the most advanced areas in terms of agriculture, horticulture and viticulture, in the whole of the Urartian kingdom. This seems to be the case in other Urartian provinces in the Lake Urmia basin, such as Zaranda, Armarili, Ajadi and Uajais, where Sargon also claimed to have opened up granaries and wine cellars in Ulhu. There is textual and archaeological evidence to support Sargon II's account, and it shows that Urartian rulers built vast irrigation canals and reservoirs to increase crop yields.[30] The construction of water facilities often mentioned alongside the creation of orchards (^{GIŠ}*zare* / ^{GIŠ}TIR / *ṣa-ri*), vineyards (^{GIŠ}*ú-du-li-e-i*/ ^{GIŠ}GEŠTIN) and fields of grain ($^{GIŠ\ šam}$ŠE) (see Table 1). These types of agricultural activity were the mainstay of traditional highland communities.

Crops such as barley (ŠE.PAD^{MEŠ}/ *hipuni*) and wheat (^{ŠE}GIG[-BA/BI] *kibtu*, *aršātu*), which are often mentioned by Urartian rulers in royal inscriptions, were very well suited to the climate and topography of the former Urartian territory, and are still widely grown by modern farmers in the region. Archaeological excavations have revealed a large number of carbonised cereal grains from various contexts, such as pithoi, jugs, and burnt buildings from sites such as Bastam,[31] Karmir-Blur,[32] Ayanis,[33] Yukarı Anzaf,[34] Yoncatepe,[35] Qaleh Ismail Aqa,[36] Hasanlu IVB,[37] Patnos/Ağrı[38] and Sos Höyük.[39] Analysis of these grains reveals that barley (*Hordeum vulgare*), free-threshing wheat (*Triticum aestivum* / *Triticum vulgare vill*.) and emmer wheat (*Triticum dicoccum*) were by

[30] Çifçi and Greaves 2013.
[31] Hopf and Willerding 1988.
[32] Tumanian 1944; Kasabian 1957; Bedigian and Harlan 1986; Barnett and Watson 1952, 145.
[33] Peña-Cocharro *et al*. 2001; Solmaz and Dönmez 2013.
[34] Belli and Salvini 2006, 58.
[35] Dönmez and Belli 2007.
[36] Costantini and Biasini 1984.
[37] Harris 1989, 18–23.
[38] Dönmez 2003.
[39] Longford *et al*. 2009, 125.

Fig. 3. One of the cuneiform inscriptions of king Minua located on the Minua canal at Kadembastı Mevkii, Van.

Fig. 4. A view of Qara Zia Eddin plain, Aq Çay from Bastam (courtesy of B. Genç).

far the most dominant species,[40] and in many ancient Near Eastern societies, barley and wheat were the basis of the diet. Barley is well suited to the long harsh winter conditions and poor soil of eastern Anatolia, and can yield viable harvests even in bad years. It is likely that barley and wheat provided the basic supply of carbohydrates in the Urartian diet.[41]

The construction of large storage facilities, most of which date from king Minua's reign to that of Rusa son of Argishti, also suggest that with the foundation of the Urartian kingdom, more land came under cultivation, and that there was a concomitant increase in harvested goods. The archaeological and textual evidence indicates that such facilities were mostly built during the reigns of Argishti I, Sarduri II in the 8th century BC and Rusa son of Argishti (Karmir-Blur, Ayanis, Kef Kalesi and Bastam) in the 7th century BC. The 7th century BC storage facilities, were much larger in size and thus had a greater carrying capacity than those of the 8th century. There were two main types of Urartian storage facilities: É *'ari* for storing cereals, and storage rooms with pithoi for wine, oil and other liquids; although archaeological discoveries have shown that sometimes, cereals were also stored in pithoi**.**

The *kapi* was used as a unit of measurement in cuneiform inscriptions for É *'ari* granaries, and the inscriptions related to the building of granaries usually state the king's name, the construction of the *'ari* along with its contents in *kapi*, which were occasionally measured in BANEŠ rather than *kapi*. On two occasions the capacities of *'ari* are given in BANEŠ instead of *kapi*, and Sarduri II mentions in one of the Arin-Berd inscriptions that he constructed three *'ari*, giving their capacities as 12,600, 11,500 and 24,100 BANEŠ, respectively (A 9-20). The same king also mentions the construction two *'ari* whose capacities are both given in *kapi* and BANEŠ as 11,884 and 8200, respectively, at the site of Armavir (A 9-19 lines 9 and 12). However, it is interesting to note that there is only one inscription (A 5-66) which mentions the construction of a *'ari* by Minua with a capacity of 23,100 *kapi* located north-west of Van Kalesi. The capacities of *'ari* storage-rooms vary from the largest capacity of 32,057 *kapi* (A 8-31) to the smallest at only 1432 *kapi* (A 14-5). However, except for an *'ari* from the time of king Minua, most inscriptions referring to *'ari* date to the reign of Argishti I and Sarduri II.[42]

[40] Hopf and Willerding 1988; Peña-Cocharro *et al*. 2001; Dönmez 2003; Dönmez and Belli 2007; Solmaz and Dönmez 2013; Barnett and Watson 1952, 145; Harris 1989, 18–19.

[41] The possible site of a brewery was uncovered at Karmir-Blur (Piotrovsky 1969, 139) (Room 15) which suggest that barley was also used for brewing beer.

[42] See Çifçi 2017, table 6.

Archaeological excavations from almost all excavated Urartian period sites revealed the existence of pithoi that varied in size from one site to another (Ayanis, Kef Kalesi, Karmir-Blur, Bastam, Toprakkale, Çavuştepe, Arin-Berd, Armavir, Altıntepe, Kayalıdere, Yukarı Anzaf and Yoncatepe). Some of these sites usually contain two storage rooms with pithoi such as Altıntepe, Yukarı Anzaf, Çavuştepe (Fig. 5) and Kef Kalesi. Pithoi were usually accompanied by bullae, as in the case of the Ayanis (Fig. 6) western storage rooms. The large vessels uncovered here indicate that cloths were originally tied over their mouths, with the string sealed with a bulla.[43] Three units of measurement are found on the shoulders of pithoi: *aqarqi*, *terusi* and *liš,* which measured wine, olive oil and other liquids. After *aqarqi* and *terusi* (both written in phonetically [*aqarqi*, *terusi*] and acrophonically as *a*. or *tí*.), the third and smallest unit was the *liš* (Akkadian *itqūru*) which only appears on pithoi and bullae at Ayanis. It is believed that the relationship between these three units should be 1 aqarqi = 10 *terusi* and 1 *terusi* = 20 *LIŠ*.[44]

Fig. 5. One of the Çavuştepe storage rooms with pithoi, Lower Citadel.

[43] Çilingiroğlu 2001, 69, fig. 2.

[44] Mileto and Salvini 2010, 39; Salvini 2010, 366. For an overview of various suggestions about the relationship between *aqarqi* = 10 *terusi* and 1 *terusi*, see Çifçi 2017.

a

b

Fig. 6. Ayanis. West storage area rooms 5 (a) and 7 (b) (courtesy of A. Batmaz).

Animal Husbandry in Urartu and its Environs

Prior to the formation of the Urartian kingdom in the highlands of eastern Anatolia, Transcaucasia and north-western Iran animal husbandry was the main source of income for the local tribal communities of these regions and it is likely that it maintained its importance throughout the lifetime of the kingdom (Figs. 8–10). Urartian royal inscriptions reveal that its army raided neighbouring regions for booty, tribute, human and other resources on a regular basis. Some of these military campaigns were directly concerned with the acquisition of booty in the form of livestock and precious metals,[45] and were carried out against weak opponents such as the Diauehi in the north-west and the Etiuni in the north-east. The annals of king Argishti I (A 8-3) and Sarduri II (A 9-3) are particularly informative in respect of the booty taken during these campaigns and for instance, mention cattle (^{GUD}*pahini*), sheep (^{UDU}*šuše*), goats (UDU.MÁŠ-*li* = *niqali*), horses (ANŠE.KUR.RA^{MEŠ}/ *hu-šá-a*) and occasionally camels (ANŠE.A.AB.BA.^{MEŠ}). Urartian and Assyrian texts indicate that animal husbandry was very significant in the west and south-western parts of the Lake Urmia basin such as Gilzan, Musasir, Bushtu, Mana Uishdish, Ushkaia, Sangibute, Ulhu and Armarili, and each of these areas may have specialised in raising specific types of domesticated animals.

Goats and sheep must have been reared for their wool to be used in textile,[46] as well as for their meat and milk, with the latter also processed to make cheese. Urartian royal inscriptions also reveal that cattle, sheep and goats were sacrificed in religious rituals at temples, the gates of Haldi and open-air shrines. Furthermore, leather which is a major by-product of stock-rearing, must have been utilised for such things as harnesses, shoes, sandals and strap fastenings by the Urartians.

However perhaps the most important animal for the Urartian state was the horse, which was often harnessed to a chariot (^{GIŠ}GIGIR) and used for the transportation of goods. Horses were indispensable to the army and were used as means of transport in the vast Urartian countryside, and they might also have been reared under state supervision in specific areas of the kingdom. Support for this idea may be found in Sargon II's account of his eighth military campaign, in which he mentions horse breeding in Armarili and Sangibatu, and that it occupied a special place in Urartian society.[47] Moreover, he states that

[45] See Çifçi 2017, table 9 for Urartian kings, their opponent and a booty list of animals.
[46] Çifçi 2012.
[47] *ARAB* II, 165.

the people of Ushkia in the province of Zaranda[48] were known both for their knowledge of horse-riding and for their skills in horse-rearing for the Urartian army. In the same account, there is also mention of Baru, where horses were reserved for the royal army of Rusa I.[49]

There is also archaeological evidence from sites such as Bastam, Yukarı Anzaf, Toprakkale, Karmir-Blur, Armavir and Horom that indicates the importance of animal husbandry in Urartian society.[50] At Karmir-Blur in a heavily burned room (Room 26), archaeologists recovered the burnt bones of young calves and smaller animals. It has been argued that these bones were the remains of animals that had been killed on the sacrificial table in Room 25.[51] Similar discoveries were made at Bastam in rows of rooms (MB2-1, OB5-6 and OB5-7). Here, thousands of animal bones and hundreds of clay bullae were uncovered.[52] The skulls and feet of the animals were missing, which was the case at the Karmir-Blur and Toprakkale. As at Karmir-Blur, most of the animal bones at Bastam came from sheep and goats.

Metalwork

Archaeological excavations from Urartian sites have recovered numerous artefacts made from iron, copper, gold, silver and bronze, with temple complexes providing the majority of metal artefacts. The survival and development of the kingdom was very closely associated with its easy access to the mining, smelting and manufacturing of iron, and the Urartians were very skilled at producing tools and weapons in this important material.[53] The recovery of huge numbers of bronze artefacts from sites such as Karmir-Blur, Toprakkale, Giyimli (Hırkanıs), Çavuştepe and Altıntepe, have led some scholars to consider the Urartian kingdom as a 'metalworking centre',[54] where the production of metal artefacts was very closely associated with the state.[55] It should also be mentioned that there have been arguments about the role of trade in regard to the metal artefacts manufactured by the Urartian state.[56]

[48] *ARAB* II, 158.
[49] *ARAB* II, 159.
[50] Harutiunian 1964; Obermaier 2006; Boessneck and Kokabi 1988; Onar *et al*. 2008.
[51] Harutiunian 1964, 185; Barnett and Watson 1952, 144; Barnet 1959, 4; Piotrovsky 1969, 155.
[52] Zimansky 1979, 53; 1988, 107.
[53] Belli 1987, 92; van Loon 1966, 80–84; Zimansky 1985, 97; Wartke 1991.
[54] Merhav 1991; Seidl 1988.
[55] Tarhan 1986; Belli 1991b; Bernbeck 2003–04.
[56] Barnett 1956, 229–37; 1982, 366–69; Belli 1982; 1991a.

Although archaeological excavations and surveys carried out at Urartian sites have revealed metal production centres such as Karmir-Blur,[57] Armavir[58] and Metsamor,[59] as well as the Mağara Tepe and Pürneşe iron mines in the Lake Van basin,[60] as yet, no textual evidence relating to the ore sources used by the Urartian metalsmiths has come to light. However, there is mention of tribute in the form of metal from the kingdom of Militia (A 5-5 line 18), Qumaha (A 9-3 IV 52–56) and Diauehi (A 8-2 lines 19–25) in Urartian written sources. It is clear that in Urartian society, certain types of metal were used for specific purposes. For example, bronze was usually limited to military equipment (for example, helmets, shields, swords, quivers, arrowheads, daggers and horse harnesses), votive items and some everyday objects such as cooking cauldrons. While iron seems to have been used more widely in Urartian society, being recovered from both residential areas and in burial contexts. Iron was utilised for weapons and agricultural objects such as ploughshares, sickle-blades, hoes and knives (Fig. 7). Lastly, gold and silver were used for jewellery, votive plaques and for the decoration of various objects. Overall, its large-scale use in citadels, administrative and public buildings, and water facilities, shows that metallurgy played a crucial role in the socio-economic development of Urartian society. Furthermore, it is evident that vast quantities of iron were forged in various workshops under the control of central government, and also in rural workshops, but in the archaeological record bronze artefacts far outnumber iron ones.

Trade

It is likely that trade brought goods such as tin, ivory and horses, to the Urartian kingdom that were not otherwise available in Urartian territory, and we know that such goods also came in the form of plunder or tribute taken in military campaigns from other territories. For example, there is uncertainty regarding the origin of the tin used by Urartian smiths (to make bronze items), as there is no written, or little archaeological evidence for tin sources in Urartian territory. In fact, only two deposits of tin are known to exist in the whole of Urartu: one is in Paleoaraks, Armenia, and the other is on Mt Sahand,[61] north of Lake Urmia in Iran. Slag from cassiterite workings at Metsamor,[62] indicates that tin was being smelted here.

[57] Piotrovsky 1969, 139; Barnett and Watson 1952, 134.
[58] Martirosyan 1974, 95–98, fig. 15.
[59] Mkrtiachan 1967; Khanzayan *et al*. 1973, 195.
[60] Belli 1991a, 36–38.
[61] van Loon 1966, 85.
[62] Mkrtiachan 1967, 76.

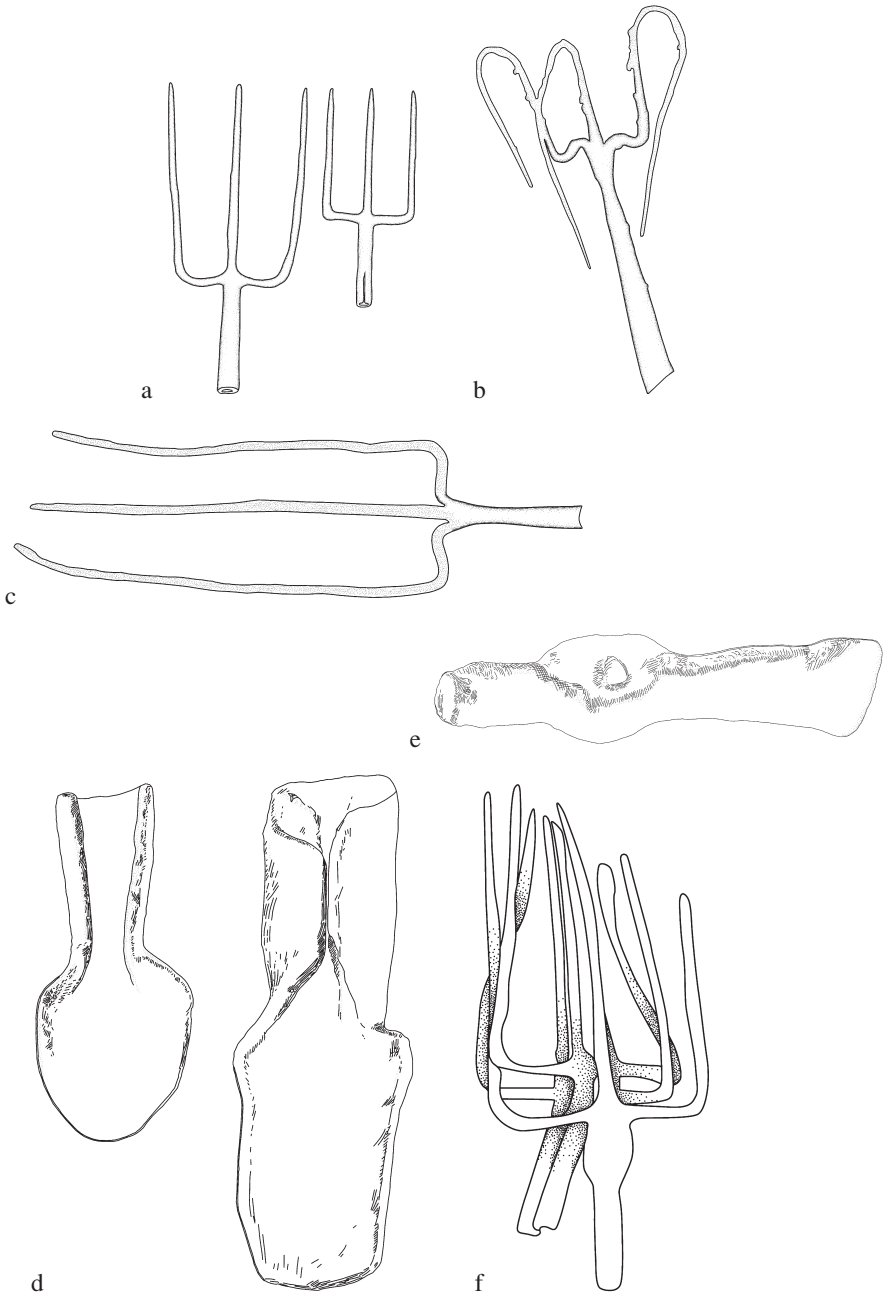

Fig. 7. Urartian agricultural tools from sites such as: (a) Karmir-Blur (after Piotrovsky 1950 40, fig. 20) (b) Patnos/Dedeli (after Öğün 1978, pl. 29, fig. 10) (c) Yoncatepe (after Belli 2007, fig. 9) (d–e) Toprakkale (after Lehmann-Haupt 1931, 545, 546, 547) and (f) Ayanis (after Baştürk 2011, 176, fig. 16).

The vast quantity of bronze artefacts from Urartian sites such as Karmir-Blur, Ayanis, Giyimli, Toprakkale and Yukarı Anzaf, along with Sargon II's account of the Musasir palace and Haldi temple artefacts, suggests that it is unlikely that Urartu obtained all its needs from the above tin sources. Admittedly, further tin ore deposits may still be discovered in Urartian territory in the future, but it seems likely that Urartu obtained vast quantities of ore through trade with eastern Iran or Afghanistan. Here, significant deposits of tin ore are known to have been exploited throughout the 2nd and 1st millennia BC.[63]

On the other hand, the discovery of several foreign cylinder seals and seal impressions (generally showing similar features to Neo-Assyrian and Babylonian examples) from Urartian[64] sites (for example, Karmir-Blur, Arin-Berd and Bastam),[65] and also a Urartian seal found at the site of Tell al Ma'az in Syria,[66] indicates the existence of commercial ties between Urartian merchants and Near Eastern traders. This is also suggested by a letter from the Neo-Assyrian kingdom administrative archive, which records smuggling activities between Urartian and Kummean merchants. In the letter, Assur-resuwa, who was the Assyrian royal delegate in Kumme,[67] notes the movement of goods between the Assyrian and Urartian states.[68] The letter states that Kummean smugglers bought luxury goods in the Assyrian cities of Calah and Nineveh, and then took these goods into Urartian territory where they exchanged them for other precious items that were subsequently traded in Assyrian cities. Although it is hard to know exactly what they were trading, or who on the Urartian side engaged with the traders and the extent of this trade network, it evident that despite the on-going struggle between Assyria and Urartu there was at least some movement of commodities between the two states.

[63] Moorey 1994, 300–01; Muhly 1985, 281–85.

[64] Most of the known Urartian seals and seal impressions are from sites that were founded by Rusa son of Argishti, and therefore to be dated to the 7th century BC. Ayvazian (2006, 14–15) argued that Rusa son of Argishti introduced a classification of seal to help towards centralisation and better administrative control.

[65] Piotrovsky 1970, 60; Khozhash 2000, 151–54, figs. 1–3; Ayvazian 2006.

[66] Oates and Oates 1988.

[67] Kumme was situated north-west of Ulluba (which is located east of the Cizre plain) (Parker 2001, 89–94).

[68] Lanfranchi and Parpola 1990, no. 100. In this letter, Assur-resuwa asked the Assyrian authorities to arrest the merchants. The trade network mentioned in the Assur-resuwa letter was operated by six Kummeans, with two of them under the jurisdiction of the Kummean king Arije, and the other four under the Arisa (probably king Arije's son and the crown prince) (Lanfranchi and Parpola 1990, xxv).

Fig. 8. Herds graze in uncultivated areas and high plateaux through late spring until the cereals harvested in late autumn (Yukarı Kaymaz, village of Gürpınar, Van).

Fig. 9. Cattle grazing in a pasture, Kayalıdere, village of Varto, Muş (courtesy of E. Konyar).

Fig. 10. In eastern Anatolia most households gather grass and fodder throughout the summer and then use it to feed their livestock during the long winter months (Aşağı Kaymaz, village of Gürpınar, Van).

The Spoils of War

Material gain, in the form of booty and tribute, was undoubtedly one of the main objectives of the military expeditions of Urartian kings. Following its rapid territorial expansion in the late 9th/early 8th century BC, such military expeditions targeted neighbouring regions in order to take booty and tribute, which would further enrich the power and wealth of the Urartian kingdom. For instance, the western and south-western parts of the Lake Urmia basin (Manna, Bushtu, Parshua, Abilianihi and Urme) and Lake Sevan basin (Arquqi, Adahuni, Luipruni, Eshumuai, Kamniu, Qu'albani, Uhuni and Teriani) seem to have been raided for animals,[69] while the Ararat region of Armenia (Etiuni, Eriahi and Uitruhi) and various parts of Anatolia (for example, Elazığ-Malatya and the Adıyaman) were targeted for their mineral sources. Numerous inscriptions of Urartian rulers make reference to successful military campaigns, and the capture of booty and tribute from these areas, and there is no doubt these material gains played a significant role in the formation and expansion of the Urartian kingdom.[70]

[69] See Çifçi 2017, table 9.

[70] For a detailed discussion of warfare income and its importance for the state economy, see Çifçi 2017.

Discussion

Before discussing the role played by Urartian monarchs in the socio-economic life of the Urartian society, the importance of the physical geography and climate of the Urartian territory should be mentioned. It is evident that the physical geography and climate of eastern Anatolia, Caucasia and north-western Iran, played an imported role in shaping Urartian society. Urartian kings' investment in terms of agriculture (such as irrigation) and animal husbandry (dew ponds in highlands for herds) were influenced by the reality of the physical geography and the varying climate of these regions. However, it was not just the environmental conditions that shaped the Urartian state. The Assyrian army was also an important factor, as the threat it posed led to the construction of numerous military citadels along the Urartian kingdom's southern border. Another factor is the existence of various tribes or small polities, which seem to have played an important part in shaping the socio-economic organisation of the kingdom, especially during the early expansionist period. The construction of religious structures for the national god Haldi in the Lake Van basin during the early expansionist period, indicates a state policy of using religion as a unifying force for these disparate tribes or small polities.[71]

In light of these important factors that shaped the political and economic institutions of the Urartian kingdom, we can move on to concentrate on the textual and archaeological evidence that was presented above. Textual and archaeological evidence from Lake Van, the Upper Murat, the Araxes river basin and western parts of the Lake Urmia, shows that Urartian monarchs were involved in the organisation of economic resources of these regions and, in particular, in the building of important administrative and economic centres. The existence of numerous settlements in the central part of the kingdom also indicates that there was a significant rise in population during the kingdom's lifetime (see Table 2). In order to support the increasing number of people in the kingdom more land was cultivated and irrigated, particularly in the Lake Van basin and the Ararat plain.

There is enough archaeological and textual evidence to suggest that Urartian monarchs were involved in the organisation of agricultural areas and the construction of storage facilities. However, the bullae from the Ayanis storage areas reveal that agricultural products were coming in from various parts of the kingdom,[72] indicating that not all of the agricultural land in Urartian territories was under the control of the kingdom or monarch. Despite the limitation

[71] Çifçi 2018.
[72] Salvini 2001.

Table 2. The É.GAL and URU constructions of the Urartian kings.

King	É.GAL	URU	Location
Ishpuini			
	A 2-6A-C	-	Aşağı Anzaf
	A 2-9A-B	A 2-9A-B	Karahan
Minua			
	A 5-6 Ro (b)	-	Alazlı/Muş
	A 5-10	-	Tashtepe/Mianduaba
	-	A 5-17	Salamanağa/Erciş
	A 5-11A-B; A 5-37; A 5-38	-	Aznavurtepe
	A 5-25 Ro; A 5-39	-	Patnos
	A 5-26	-	Başbulak/Iğdır
	A 5-27	A 5-27?	Tsolakert/Taşburun
	A 5-28; A 5-29; A 5-30 Ro; A 5-31 Ro	A 5-28; A 5-29; A 5-30 Ro; A 5-31 Ro	Karahan
	-	A 5-32	Yedikilise/Van
	A 5-33; A 5-36	-	Güsak/Köşk
	A 5-34	A 5-34	Kevenli/Van
	A 5-35; A 5-56?	-	Körzüt
	A 5-40A-B	-	Pirabat
	A 5-41 A-B	-	Delibaba/Pasinler
	A 5-42A-C-A; 5-43; A 5-62	-	Yukarı Anzaf
	A 5-47	-	Kobanis/Van
	A 5-51	-	Malazgirt
	A 5-52	-	Başkale
	A 5-61	-	Qalatgah
	A 5-67	-	Bostankaya
Argishti I			
	A 8-17 A e B; A 8-18 e 19; A 8-20	A 8-1 Vo; A 8-3 II	Arin-Berd
	A 8-16	A 8-2 Ro	Armavir
	A 8-3 III	-	*Shurishili*[a]
	A 8-22	-	Soğucak/Muş
Sarduri II			
	A 9-3 III; A 9-3 IV[b]	-	*Uraia*[c] and *Puluadi*[d]
	A 9-3 IV	-	Eriahi (Leninkan)
	A 9-17	-	Çavuştepe

King	É.GAL	URU	Location
	A 9-18	-	Bahçecik/Karakoçan
	A 9-37	-	Mollabajazet/Sardarabat
Rusa I			
	A 10-1	-	Nor-Bayazet
	A 10-2[b]	A 10-2[b]	Tsovinar
Argishti II			
	-	A 11-2 Vo[b]	Hagi/Erciş
	A 11-4	-	Razliq/Sarab
	A 11-6?	A 11-6?	Shisheh/Ahar
Rusa III			
	A 12-9	A 12-1VIII[b]	Ayanis
	-	A 12-4	Adilcevaz/Kef Kalesi
	-	A 12-7[c]	Bastam
	-	A 12-8	Zvartnots/Ecmiadzin

É.GAL: ? indicates the presence of a É.GAL is not certain; a. south-west periphery of Urartu; b. more than one É.GAL; c. South Lake of Urmia; d. The modern village of Seghendel, 30 km west of Ahar in north-west Iran.

URU: ? indicates the presence of an URU is not certain; a. Rusa I in the Tsovinar inscription states that he constructed an É.GAL and named ^{D}IM-*i* URU (city of the Teishebai); b. the Hagi/Erciş inscription of Argishti II and Rusa III's Ayanis temple inscription mentions the construction of more than one URU (URU^{MEŠ}); c. The Bastam inscription of Rusa III mentions the construction of an É.BÁRA and named it *'Rusai* URU.TUR*'*.

imposed by the archaeological and textual evidence, it is nevertheless clear that Urartian monarchs were actively involved in the organisation of agricultural areas, irrigation and the construction of storage facilities.

As is the case with agriculture, most of the archaeological evidence relating to Urartian monarch involvement in animal husbandry has been uncovered from sites dating to the reign of Rusa son of Argishti in the mid-7th century BC, while textual evidence comes from the annals of Argishti I and Sarduri II, which date to the 8th century BC. Therefore, it is hard to know for certain how the state was involved in animal-based production activities, as there are chronological differences between our evidence. Nevertheless, Urartian royal inscriptions indicate that during military campaigns, vast numbers of animals were captured from neighbouring territories as booty, and it is reasonable to expect that the monarch was involved in some aspects of animal husbandry and also owned his own substantial herd.

The recovery of large quantities of metal artefacts from Urartian sites indicate that metallurgical activities played a crucial role in the socio-economic development of the kingdom. There is also archaeological and textual evidence

for the existence of a small-scale exchange network between Urartian and other Near Eastern merchants, along which tin and exotic materials passed.

After mentioning the important factors that shaped the political and economic institutions as well as the economic resources and movement of commodities of the Urartian kingdom, I would like to move on to re-examine the text on which Diakonoff based his class-based model of Urartian society. However, before doing so it should be stated that there are conflicting views about how to translate Sarduri II's inscription of Hazine Kapısı/Analıkız at Van Kalesi (A 9-3 VII), especially the words *ardâie*, *isiuše* and *turubi*.

(1') ^{D}*hal-di-i-ni-ni al-su-i-ši-ni* ^{mD}*sar$_5$-du-ri-i-še* ^{m}*ar-giš-ti-e-hi-ni-še a-li-e*

(2') *i-ú* ^{D}*hal-di-iš-me* MAN-*tú-hi a-ru-ú-ni na-ha-a-di* ^{LÚ}AD-*si-ni e-si-i* MAN-*tú-hi-ni*

(3') *a-li ar-da-i-e i-ni i-si-ú-še* ^{KUR}*šú-ra-a-ni e-di-ni tú-ru-ú-bi* 92 ^{GIŠ}GIGIR^{MEŠ}

(4') 3 LIM 6 ME *PIT-HAL-LU^{MEŠ}* 35 *a-ti-bi* 2 LIM 11 ^{LÚ}ÉRIN^{MEŠ} *e-'a PIT-HAL-LU^{MEŠ}-e-i*

(5') *e-'a* ^{LÚ}ÉRIN.GÌR^{MEŠ} *-e-i i-na-ni ar-da-i-e* ^{LÚ}A.SI^{MEŠ}*-na-ni e-di-ni tú-ru-bi*

(6') *a-li i-si-ú-še ma-a-nu hu-šú-bi* 1 ME 21 ^{LÚ}UN^{MEŠ} 10 LIM 4 ME 8 ANŠE.KUR.RA^{MEŠ}

(7') 1 ME 32 ANŠE.GÌR.NUN.NA^{MEŠ}10 LIM 2 LIM 3 ME 21 ^{GU4}[ÁB] ^{MEŠ} 9 LIM 36 ^{GU4}*pa-hi-i-ni-e*^{MEŠ}

(8') PAP [20] LIM 1 LIM 3 ME 57 ^{GU4}*pa-a-hi-i-ni-e*^{MEŠ} 30 LIM 5 LIM 4 ME 67 ^{UDU}*šú-še-e*^{MEŠ}

(9') 2 LIM 1 ME 14 *BE-LI*^{MEŠ} *gu-nu-ši-ni-e-i* 1 LIM 3 ME 32 ^{GISH}BAN^{MEŠ} 40 LIM 7 LIM 9 ME 70 ^{GIŠ}GAG.TI^{MEŠ}

(10') 1 ME 2 *a-ti-bi* 2 LIM 1 ME 33 *ka-pi* ŠE.PAD^{MEŠ} 1 ME 11 *a-qar-qi* GEŠTIN^{MEŠ} 86 *a-qar-qi* 7 *ṭi$_5$-ru-si man-ka-li* Ì^{MEŠ}

(11') 7 LIM 79 MA.NA-*e* URUDU^{MEŠ} 3 ME 36 ÌR^{MEŠ} ^{LÚ}*ú-ru-ur-da-a-ni e-di-ni tú-ru-ú-bi*

(12') ^{mD}*sar$_5$-du-ri-i-ni* ^{m}*ar-gi-iš-ti-e-hi* MAN *DA-NU* MAN *al-su-ú-i-ni*

(13') MAN *šú-ra-a-*^{r}*ú*$^{?}$*-e* MAN ^{KUR}*bi-a-i-na-*^{r}*ú*$^{?}$*-e* MAN MAN^{MEŠ}*-ú-e a-lu-si* ^{URU}*ṭu-uš-pa-e* URU

(1–3) Thanks to the greatness of Haldi, Sarduri, son of Argishti. When Haldi gave me the kingship I set on the paternal throne of the kingship.

(4) (^{KUR}*šú-ra-a-ni e-di-ni tú-ru-ú-bi*) 92 chariots (of war), 3600 riders, 352,011 soldiers on horseback and on foot, (5–6) from this *ardaie* (^{LÚ}A.SI^{MEŠ}) for the soldiers *turubi*, there was that *isiuše* I discarded (throw away(?) (*hušubi*(?).[73]

[73] Line 5 has also been translated by Diakonoff (1963, 56–57) as follows: 'I eliminated for(?) from(?) the soldiers. I destroyed, what was burden (?), I threw away' and Melikishvili (1960:

(6–9) 121 people, 10,408 horses,[74] 132 mules,[75] 12,321 cows, 9036 oxen a total of 21,357 cattle and 35,467 sheep, 2114 weapons of war, 1332 bows, 47,970 arrows.

(10) 122,133 *kapi* of barley,[76] 111 *aqarqi* of wine and 86 *aqarqi* and 7 *tirusi* of *mankali* oil, (11) 7079 copper *minas*,[77] 336 servants[78] (LÚ*ú-ru-ur-da-a-ni e-di-ni tú-ru-ú-bi*).

(12–13) (I) Sarduri, the son of Argishti, mighty king, great king, king of Biainili, king of kings, lord of the city Tushpa' (A 9-3 VII).

Diakonoff considers KUR*šú-ra-a-ni* (sumerogram KUR.KUR^{MEŠ}) that appears in line 3 of the text to be 'weapons or sword' and refers to it as the armed guard of the Urartian royal palace,[79] but the discovery of a lance/spear from the site of the Ayanis temple area, with a dedicatory text to the Urartian national god Haldi, was believed to be his *šuri*, which is contrary to Diakonoff's suggestion.[80] Since the word *šurele* also appears in a number of inscriptions with the land determinative KUR (KUR*šurele*) it was also associated with the region of Ağrı plain in the Upper Murat.[81] Diakonoff argued that the members of the *šurele* were freed from their military service by this decree of Sarduri II.[82] Also, the sumerogram LÚA.SI^{MEŠ} was identified with the *hurâdinele* in the same text by Diakonoff and he suggested that it referred to all military units and their armour.[83] Furthermore, *urordele* were suggested to be the last group on the list who were occupied with agriculture, and who provided the army with agricultural products.

To sum up, Diakonoff argued that the text represents a decree of Sarduri II (*ardâie*, from verb *ar-* 'to give') that aimed to reduce the taxes or burden on specific population groups in Urartian society (*šurele*, *hurâdinele*, *urordele*

298) offers the following translation for the same line 'This offering(?)[ini isiuše] (extra?) for(?) (from?) entire kingdom I destroyed'.

[74] Diakonoff (1991a, 20) interprets it as 1408 horses.

[75] Diakonoff (1991a, 20) and Melikshvili (1960, 288) consider it as mules contrary to Salvini (*CTU* I, 431), who translated it as camel, however ANŠE.GÍR.NUN.NA^{MEŠ} should be read as mules.

[76] Diakonoff (1991a, 20) and Melikshvili (1960, 288) translate it as 1,022,133 *kapi* of barley.

[77] Diakonoff (1991a, 20) reads it as 779 copper *minas*.

[78] Diakonoff (1991a, 20) and Melikshvili (1960, 288) considers 'ÍR^{MEŠ}' as 'slave', whereas Zimansky (1985, 56 and 77 no 77) states that 336 should be read as 'month' and not 'slave' based on Lehmann-Haupt's photograph of the inscription.

[79] Diakonoff 1991a, 17.

[80] Çilingiroğlu and Salvini 1999.

[81] Payne and Ceylan 2003.

[82] Diakonoff 1991a, 17–19.

[83] Diakonoff and Starostin 1986, 63

and *purâle*).[84] Although this was the conclusion of Diakonoff in regard to the Sarduri II text of Analıkız, it should be pointed out that there are different views about how to translate certain words in this text such as *ardâie*, *isiuše* and *túrubi*. This can have important implications for our understanding of the text and, for example, the verb *túrubi*, a third person singular transitive past tense from a verbal root *túru*, was considered by both Melikishvili and Diakonoff to mean 'to destroy'. In contrast, Salvini did not offer a translation for it even though he disagreed with this interpretation.[85] The verb appears three times and may be concerned with relatively high numbers of soldiers, the measurement of agricultural crops, as well as horses and weapons. On the other hand, the *isiuše* was also suggested to mean 'burden', 'exaction'[86] or 'surplus'[87] contrary to Salvini who referred to it as 'consumption/use'. It is evident that there is no scholarly agreement about how to translate certain words that may affect our understanding of the text. Therefore, it is hard to support Diakonoff's class-based model of Urartian society solely based on his interpretation of it.

Overall, the text not only lists high numbers of troops but also livestock, goods and weapons, and the first few lines of the text declared that Sarduri II accomplished these things when he succeeded to the crown. As there is no specific name of an enemy recorded in the text it is hard to know, however, whether the people and products mentioned in it represent spoils of war, or an inventory of the Urartian army and other assets of the state.

However, after considering all the textual and archaeological evidence that has been presented above in regard to the socio-economic organisation of the Urartian kingdom, it is evident that there may have been changes over the course of its history as well as some regional variations. It is also possible to distinguish three different phases of socio-economic and political development within the life time of the kingdom as I argued elsewhere: an 'early expansionist' period, a 'crisis' period and finally a 'restructuring' and 'reforming' period.[88] The early phase is marked by the Urartian army's ability to expand state boundaries and generate revenues in the form of booty and tribute. In my opinion, during this early period in order to incorporate various small polities, kingdoms or tribes that existed in eastern Anatolia, Transcaucasia and north-western Iran, there might have been neither a centralised nor a decentralised system of governance. The archaeological and textual evidence relating to economic

[84] Diakonoff 1991a, 18.
[85] *CTU* I, 430.
[86] Diakonoff 1963, 56–57; 1991a, 17.
[87] Diakonoff 1991a, 17 – citing Melikishvili.
[88] Çifçi 2017.

production during this early period shows some variations within the kingdom dependent on location (Lake Van basin, the Elazığ and Erzurum plains, etc.) and the type of production (agriculture, animal husbandry, metallurgy). For example, textual evidence from the Lake Van and the Ararat plain indicates that the monarch was actively involved in improving the land for agricultural activities and in the building of new citadels and cities in these regions. In contrast, there is no evidence of royal investment in certain regions such as the Elazığ and Erzurum plains. It is also important to point out that earlier period royal inscriptions mention the name of individual provincial governors, indicating that these individuals might have been appointed from among the leaders of powerful tribes (Titia[89] and Zaiani[90]). This perhaps signals a more fragile kingdom and indeed, if this was the case, avoiding conflict within the newly formed state might have been the priority of the monarch. Furthermore, there is overwhelming evidence to suggest that monarch was directly involved in metallurgical activities and, to a lesser degree, in agriculture in certain regions (i.e. the Lake Van basin), although there is less evidence for royal involvement in animal husbandry.

There were two major military defeats during the second phase of socio-economic and political development in Urartu, with the Cimmerians inflicting the first of these, with defeat by the forces of the Assyrian king Sargon II, following shortly after at the end of the 8th century BC. Assyrian administrative documents report the killing of 11 Urartian governors, with two also captured. The commander-in-chief of Urartian army was captured by the Cimmerians. Shortly after the Cimmerian defeat, a revolt and the killing of an Urartian king in the city of Waisi is also mentioned. After his victory against Rusa I, the Assyrian king Sargon II marched through Urartian territory in the Lake Urmia region on a plundering mission that ended with the sacking of the sacred city of Musasir. This must have had devastating consequences for the monarch as both wars occurred over a short period of time, and must have caused shortage of agricultural surpluses, particularly in the Lake Urmia basin. Assyrian administrative documents indicate that during this crisis period there was a power struggle within the Urartian royal family and among provincial governors. This is likely to have undermined the authority of the reigning king, and it is my belief that this power struggle laid the foundation for the reforms of Rusa son of Argishti.

[89] *CTU* A 5-8.
[90] *CTU* A 9-18.

Archaeological and textual evidence from the sites constructed by the king, Rusa (III), son of Argishti, during the second half of the 7th century BC indicate that attempts were made to exercise more royal authority. This suggests that the kingdom might have been reconstructed or reformed in terms of decision making and production. Administrative documents such as clay tablets, bullae and the construction of massive citadels during this later phase of the 7th century BC, at sites such as Karmir-Blur, Bastam, Toprakkale, Ayanis,[91] Çavuştepe[92] and Yukarı Anzaf[93] show that there was a more centralised administration system. However, it is hard to know for sure how long this period lasted, or how successful king Rusa was in his attempts to exercise more authority by centralising both decision making and production. These documents indicate that to a certain degree, there was a central authority during the lifetime of the Urartian kingdom, an idea that had been championed by Soviet scholars and was subsequently favoured by Turkish archaeologists such as Belli[94] and Taner Tarhan.[95] In contrast, these different phases of socio-economic and political development show that the political economy of the Urartian state changed over time and also showed regional variations.

Conclusion

After emerging around the Lake Van basin and subsequently expanding its boundaries to north-eastern Anatolia, Armenia and north-west Iran, the Urartian monarchy began a series of construction projects and opened up new agricultural areas along with major water facilities for the newly founded Urartian cities or settlements. It appears that the monarchy was successful in its efforts to increase agricultural production and agriculture became as important as animal husbandry during the lifetime of the kingdom in highland regions. Furthermore, advances in metallurgy especially in iron and bronze, trade activities and the revenues that were generated through warfare in terms of tribute and booty, also appear to have contributed greatly to the socio-economic development of Urartian civilisation.

Overall in this paper, it has been argued that three phases of socio-economic and political development can be recognised in Urartu. It was argued that during the early expansionist period, the Urartian monarch might have used

[91] *CTU* Ay-1-2, CB Ay-1-12; Salvini 2001, 279–92.
[92] *CTU* Çav-1-2; Dinçol *et al*. 2001.
[93] *CTU* An-1, CB An-1; Belli and Salvini 2003.
[94] Belli 1978; 1982, 188–90.
[95] Tarhan 1983; 1986.

neither a centralised nor decentralised system of governance, since the monarch aimed to incorporate various small polities or kingdoms and tribes that probably existed in eastern Anatolia, Transcaucasia and north-western Iran in this transition period. Archaeological and textual evidence relating to economic production during this period shows some variations within the kingdom, depending on its location and the type of production. On the other hand, during the crisis period it appears that there were power struggles both within the royal family and by provincial governors. Also, this period was marked by two major military defeats and as a result, there might have been shortages of men and agricultural products. However, archaeological and textual evidence dating to the reign of Rusa son of Argishti, suggests that the kingdom might have been restructured and reformed, as there are indications of a more centralised administration system. For example, during this last phase, clay tablets and bullae were introduced and massive citadels with various administrative buildings and enormous storage facilities were constructed. However, it is possible to suggest that despite these overall trends, there may have been smaller changes over the course of its history as well as some regional variations.

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URARTIAN ARCHITECTURE

Stephan KROLL

Abstract

The term 'Urartian architecture' covers buildings erected by the kingdom of Urartu between the middle of the 9th and the middle of the 7th century BC. Almost all buildings we know today were built on the king's orders; private buildings are almost unknown and unexcavated. Most buildings are fortresses of all sizes, built on natural rock with stone foundations and mud-brick superstructures. Earlier Iron Age forts in Armenia, north-western Iran and eastern Anatolia may be antecedents of Urartian fortifications. Typical of the fortresses are entrance gates with one or two towers. Fortification walls show rectangular towers and smaller rectangular buttresses. For the most part, the stones of the walls are carefully cut and fitted together and are laid in regular layers. Rectilinear ashlar blocks were used particularly on some fortification walls and on temples. Within the fortified area storehouses, temples, garrisons and stables were erected, but so too were residential areas such as reception halls. To increase agricultural productivity in the river valleys outside the fortifications, irrigation canals and more stables were constructed. Some have survived, for instance the Minua Canal near Van. It is mainly the high stone defensive walls of the forts that have survived and these can still be seen at sites such as Van, Ayanis, Körzüt and Bastam.

INTRODUCTION

Since the early 19th century, the ruins of the forgotten kingdom of Urartu have gained more and more attention from travellers who traversed the regions of eastern Anatolia, the southern Caucasus and north-western Iran. This was mainly because cuneiform stone or rock inscriptions had been found in ancient ruins or were re-used in later mediaeval buildings. The focus was on the inscriptions. Ruins were largely neglected. Only towards the end of the 19th century were ruins more closely examined as a source of possible valuable finds and more inscriptions. The architecture itself was hardly noticed as a primary source of information.

The first excavations at Toprakkale near Van by H. Rassam in 1875 and W. Belck and C.F. Lehmann-Haupt informed us roughly of the nature of the site by some sketch plans. Excavations in Armenia and research by Charles Burney and Tahsin Özgüc in eastern Anatolia produced the first measured plans in the middle of the 20th century. In the 1970s, our knowledge of Urartian

architecture was considerably enhanced by the work of Wolfram Kleiss in north-western Iran. For 10 years he excavated the big fortress at Bastam and published measured plans of more than 50 Urartian sites of all kinds he had found through surveys. At the same time, Afif Erzen excavated Çavuştepe. Later, Altan Çilingiroğlu, Veli Sevin, Taner Tarhan and Oktay Belli started work at sites in eastern Anatolia. The targets of research were sites such as Van Kalesi, Anzaf and Ayanis where excavations continue until today – to mention but a few. In Armenia, work goes on in Aramus, Oshakan, Armavir and Arin-Berd. Thus, our knowledge of Urartian architecture increases year by year; an example is the latest excavations by Konyar and others around Van Fortress.

History of Research

Since the Belck and Lehmann-Haupt expeditions to Van scholars have worked on the characteristics of Urartian architecture. The first was Waldemar Belck,[1] who described items like the natural setting, building of walls and towers without any mortar. He was the first to note a rather strange deficiency of Urartian architecture. The technique of building a vault or even a corbelled vault was generally unknown to the architects of the Urartian kings.[2] This is a rather striking failure of Urartian workmanship. We must call Urartian architecture a rather limited discipline, for these techniques were known in Mesopotamia, Assyria, in Hatti and later in Median and Achaemenid architecture. Belck noted the so-called Semiramis canal could have been built much more easily using the technique of vaulting. The big canal built by Assyrian king Sanherib at Jerwan, with its impressive vaults, its fine-cut ashlar and rusticated masonry, is the best example of advanced Assyrian technology. Apparently Assyrian workmanship was superior to the architecture of Urartu.[3]

In the 20th century, more work was undertaken on the specifics of Urartian architecture, mostly starting from single excavations such as Karmir-Blur or Arin-Berd.[4] It was in 1976 that Kleiss compiled the first overview, which he later expanded in related publications;[5] another overview was provided in 1983 by T. Forbes,[6] who had worked for some time at Bastam. In 1985, Paul

[1] Belck 1895.
[2] Belck 1895, 603.
[3] Jacobsen and Lloyd 1935, fig. 2.4, pls. VIIIb, XIIa; Garbrecht 2013.
[4] Zimansky 1998, 180–85.
[5] Kleiss 1976; 1977; 1979a; 1979b; 1982; 1983; 1988a; 1988b; 1994; 2015.
[6] Forbes 1983.

Zimansky gave a comprehensive outline of buildings in Urartian inscriptions. It was important to see what categories were crucial: fortresses, cities, canals, agricultural works, storehouses and cultic buildings.[7]

Kleiss had worked mainly in Iran and discovered more than 50 Urartian sites of all sizes during the 1970s, but he had a thorough knowledge of Urartian sites in eastern Turkey too, as he had worked there with Turkish archaeologists in the 1960s. For the first time he listed points peculiar to Urartian architecture, especially fortification construction:

> The Urartians had to cope with architectural problems caused by severe winters and construction on elevated ground. Fortification walls tended to have strong corner towers with smaller buttresses between them in the 8th century, but only equally sized buttresses in the 7th. Most buttresses were purely decorative, and they only appear on public buildings. The Urartians did not make much use of the arch, although their rock cut niches and tombs suggest they knew the principle.
>
> Pillared halls and buttressed walls had already been developed in the Hittite empire, but the Urartians gave them a special form. They perfected the small fortresses, such as Aragac in Armenia or Siah Qaleh in Iran. In the 9th and 8th centuries fortresses tended to be small and rectilinear. In the course of the 8th century they came to take more advantage of the potential of the terrain and follow mountain contours, including more space. The Toprakkale bronze model of a fortress and representations of fortresses on bronze belts, which emphasize towers, do not correspond to the architecture of the 7th century.[8]

Based on prior research, Zimansky was able to give a concise overview on the state of research:

> Most of what is known of Urartian architecture comes from excavations at fortresses and buildings that were deliberate creations of the state. Urartian architects exploited the defensive potential of the landscape in erecting enclaves on high ground beside the limited areas in which irrigation agriculture was practiced. In most cases, these were new foundations, carefully planned, and created through the coordinated efforts of considerable concentrations of manpower. The military character of this architecture is unmistakable. Virtually every Urartian site known is surrounded by a defensive wall. Way stations and signal towers were placed along the major routes, and one or more large centers controlled every major plain within the frontiers of the state. There were, of course, habitation sites. Some were built besides major citadels and were essentially part of the same architectural context, and at Karmir-Blur, Bastam and Ayanis for example, substantial parts of these have been excavated. However, Assyrian descriptions make it clear that there were also numerous settlements scattered throughout the countryside, and these remain archaeologically obscure. The environment was rich in the basic building materials: stone, wood, and clay. Urartian practices of stone working and masonry are particularly distinctive, and have made it relatively easy to

[7] Zimansky 1985.
[8] Zimansky 1998, 182–83.

> distinguish their workmanship from structures of other periods. Where feasible, they customarily built fortifications directly on bedrock, hewing out step-like wall footings to give walls solid foundations on sloped terrain. Although the Hittites had pioneered this technique, they did not practice it to the same extent that the Urartians did, and it may well have been superior iron tools that made it possible for them to do so. The bases of walls were made of stone. In most cases these lower courses were simply rough stones of various sizes, carefully placed to insure solidity without mortar. In some structures, particularly temples, rectilinear ashlar blocks were used. At Ayanis, for example, walls astonishingly similar to Inca constructions have recently been unearthed. The superstructure above the stone foundations was generally executed in large, sun-dried mud bricks. Wooden beams and matting were used for flooring materials. Depictions in other media reveal that most Urartian buildings were several stories high, and the very thick wall foundations are consistent with this. Urartian architects also exhibited their talent for stone carving in hollowing multi-chambered tombs, staircases, and other chambers from living rock. These are most prominent on the citadel rock at Van and at Toprakkale, but are found all over the kingdom. False gates carved into rock cliffs, and niches with rounded tops appear to have been important cultic sites. The distinctive Urartian temple known as a susi appears to bear some relationship to these rock 'gates'. It had a square ground plan with reinforced corners and massive walls that suggest it was a tall, free-standing tower. The facades of these buildings, however, show the same form as the false doors carved in living rock, and dedicatory inscriptions often mention dedication of the 'gates' and susi of the god in the same sentence.[9]

At the same time, more research was undertaken and published in eastern Turkey and in Armenia.[10] First is the Van region: at Çavuştepe, Erzen and his architect Akif Dâi not only documented the architecture but also tried to re-animate the destroyed fortress through fine reconstructions.[11] More excavations were conducted at Van Kalesi,[12] Anzaf, Ayanis and Altıntepe. For more than 25 years Ayanis[13] has been the focus of the most intense research in eastern Anatolia, not only documenting the rich finds but also the architecture.[14] Special studies have been published concerning the overall development from earlier periods to Urartu[15] and from Urartu to later periods,[16] with others addressing the interpretation of certain techniques or buildings.[17]

[9] Zimansky 1998, 178–80.
[10] Smith and Kafadaryan 1996.
[11] Erzen 1988.
[12] Tarhan 1994; Konyar 2011.
[13] Çilingiroğlu and Salvini 2001.
[14] Çilingiroğlu 2001; 2003; 2004.
[15] Koroglu and Konyar 2008.
[16] Khatchadourian 2016; Dan 2015.
[17] Harmanşah 2009; Baştürk 2012; Sevin 2014; Batmaz 2015.

Development of Urartian Architecture

The oldest firmly dated Urartian structure is the so-called Sardursburg at the western end of Van Kalesi. Sarduri, king of Urartu, built a platforms of fine-cut large boulders and put on it an inscription in Assyrian language (Fig. 1):

> This is the inscription of king Sarduri, son of the great king Lutipri, the powerful king who does not fear to fight, the amazing shepherd, the king who ruled the rebels. I am Sarduri, son of Lutipri, the king of kings and the king who received the tribute of all the kings. Sarduri, son of Lutipri, says: I brought these stone blocks from the city of Alniunu. I built this wall.

Historically Sarduri must have been king of Urartu around 830 BC. The predecessor he mentions, Lutipri, is otherwise unknown from Urartian texts. He could have been Lapturi, who is mentioned by Assurnasirpal II between 882 and 866 BC.[18] Another predecessor not known from Urartian sources, Aramu, is mentioned in Assyrian sources between 859 and 844 BC[19] – not only his name but also the cities that he owned are mentioned and depicted

Fig. 1. Van Kalesi, stepped platform with cuneiform inscriptions by Sarduri son of Lutipri (photograph by author).

[18] Tarhan 1980.
[19] Fuchs 2012, 135.

on the Balawat Gates. These cities show walls and towers like any other city in the Near East depicted by the Assyrians on their reliefs in the first half of the 9th century BC. Moreover, on the Balawat Gates a large pithos is shown taken away from an Urartian city. This indicates that already in the time of Aramu fully designed fortresses must have existed in early Urartu. But none of these fortresses or even the first royal city of Arzashkun has been located so far.

Intensive field research was able to identify Early Iron Age fortresses in Armenia, Nakhchivan, north-western Iran and eastern Anatolia that may be antecedents of the big Urartian fortifications built since Ishpuini and Minua. One example may be the small Early Iron Age fortress of Aliler Kalesi, found by Belli.[20] It shows a simple fortification wall without towers or buttresses, constructed of large unrefined cyclopean blocks (Fig. 2). Many Late Bronze or Early Iron Age fortresses in north-western Iran and Armenia were constructed in the same way.[21] Large uncut cyclopean blocks were placed one above the other, for example at Lchashen (Fig. 3).

Thus, the big platform Sarduri built at Van Kalesi is by its refinement certainly not the first Urartian building but rather a link in a long chain of architectural tradition and development. This development may have started a century or even several centuries earlier, long before the kingdom of Urartu came into existence. The gigantic limestone blocks of the platform weigh up to 8 or 10 tons. They were carefully cut and fit together and laid in regular layers (Fig. 1). The technique of fitting together large blocks can already be observed in imperial Hittite architecture.

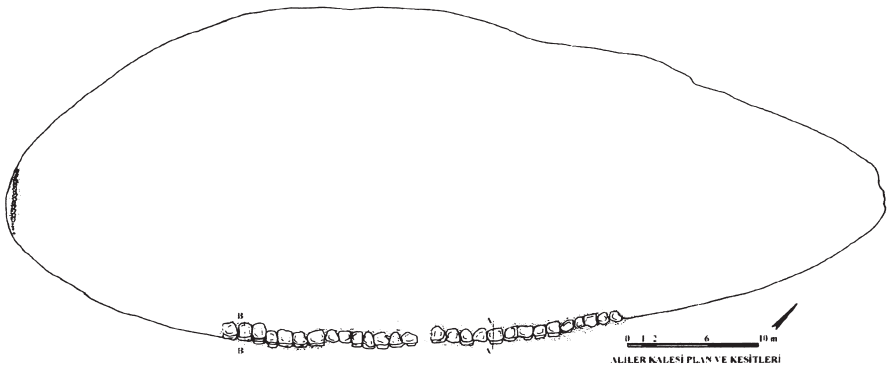

Fig. 2. Early Iron Age fortification: Aliler Kalesi (after Belli 2004).

[20] Belli 2004.
[21] Biscione 2003; 2009.

Fig. 3. Early Iron Age fortification: Lchashen fortification wall (photograph by author).

The oldest Urartian fortifications at Zivistan, Lower Anzaf and Qaleh Ismail Aqa were all built of large limestone blocks, which may be broken and cut more easily. Heavier rocks such as andesite were used later for most Urartian fortification buildings. These oldest fortification walls show no towers or buttresses.[22] Hence we may argue that the typical tradition of fortress-building only started with Minua. The fortresses show a new way of construction that can be identified as typically Urartian. The rocky ground where the fortress was set up was always worked horizontally or in steps (Fig. 4). So the walls were built on a firm and stable foundation, especially important in case of earthquakes which often occur in eastern Anatolia and the southern Caucasus. All buildings show carefully laid foundations of stone walls, on which mud-brick walls were set. Fortification walls show rectangular projections and towers. For preference, sites on rocky spurs were chosen as the location of fortifications.

A special feature of these early fortresses is the technique of fitting stone to stone, leaving almost no space in between. This can be seen, for example, in the fortification walls at Van Kalesi, Körzüt, or at Qalatgah (Fig. 5). Walls in this technique were built until the end of Urartu in the middle of the 7th century BC, as can be seen at the southern fortification wall at Ayanis. Soon,

[22] Salvini 1995, 133–34.

Fig. 4. Çavuştepe. Rock cut steps and ashlar wall (photograph by author).

Fig. 5. Qalatgah, Iran. Early Urartian fortification wall (photograph courtesy of the Hasanlu project).

another building technique became more popular, probably because it enabled walls to be built faster and cheaper. Roughly cut rocks were put one above the other and the open spaces between them filled with smaller stones. Examples are the fortification walls at Karmir-Blur, Bastam and Hasanlu (Fig. 6) and the eastern wall at Ayanis. At least since Minua so-called fine ashlar masonry (Fig. 4) was used in the constructions of special elite buildings such as temples or cultic courtyards. The best examples are the temples at Patnos, Çavuştepe, Altıntepe, Toprakkale and Ayanis. Rusticated masonry is also found at Ayanis (Fig. 7), Toprakkale, Çavuştepe and Bastam. Apart from big fortresses like Upper Anzaf or Körzüt, well dated by inscriptions, we know of many other sites that show no inscriptions at all. As inscriptions were often used to commemorate special buildings (temple, public buildings, etc.), we must assume that these sites are of minor importance. In fact these are mostly smaller sites, such as the above-mentioned Aragac or Siah Qaleh. Kleiss and Zimansky argue that these smaller sites were connecting points within a wide network of settlement units.[23] All sites, big or small, have one thing in common: there is no certain type of planning or building for a small or large fortress or a walled settlement. No single architectural plan is similar to another.

Fig. 6. Hasanlu, Iran. Late Urartian fortification wall, on a stone foundation rectangular mud bricks are set (photograph courtesy of the Hasanlu project).

[23] Zimansky 1985, 36–40.

Fig. 7. Ayanis. Fortification wall with rusticated masonry and sewage drain running through the wall (photograph by author).

As mentioned above, Assyrian architecture is generally very similar. From the excavations at Assur or Nimrud we know of huge stone fortifications. Ashlar masonry and rusticated stonework is well known. One gets the impression that walls built from fine-cut stones were even more popular in Assyria than in Urartu.

Fortifications

The best known feature of Urartian architecture is fortification walls of small or large sites. Some several hundred have been found through surveys in eastern Anatolia, Armenia and Iran, but only a few have been excavated: in Anatolia, Upper and Lower Anzaf, Ayanis, Çavuştepe, Van Kalesi and Altıntepe. For Toprakkale no fortification wall is known. In Iran, the walls of Bastam and Hasanlu IIIc have been excavated, though many more are known: Qaleh Ismail Aqa, Qalatgah, Livar, Verahram, etc. In Armenia, fortification walls were excavated at Karmir-Blur, Arin-Berd, Armavir and Davti-Blur, Aragac, Oshakan, Aramus and Horom. In describing the technical features of fortification walls

one should stick mainly to the excavated items, or to walls that are without doubt Urartian, like Körzüt, but one should be wary of labelling every prehistoric-looking wall Urartian. A good example is Zernaki Tepe with no fortification wall at all.[24] For decades, it was called Urartian. Today it is clear that Zernaki Tepe[25] must fall into the Hellenistic–Roman period. Worked stones with swallow-tails were found built into the walls of a single house.[26] Rather suspicious are fortification walls like that at Aznavurtepe,[27] or the outer fortification wall at Evoghlu Qaleh in Iran near Khoy;[28] these have never been questioned, though both might belong to a later period. In the case of Evoghlu there is a massive Achaemenid presence as pottery finds show.[29] There may be many more examples like these. Without excavation no solid answer is possible. This is the reason why, unlike Kleiss's publications, I do not include unexcavated fortification walls as examples of Urartian architecture. Likewise I do not consider fortification walls to be Urartian or Iron Age if they show zig-zag patterns or round towers. The excavations at Artashat in Armenia have shown that fortifications with round towers were built in the Hellenistic period.[30] Hence the round towers at Oğlankale are not proof for their existence in the Iron Age, but a hint that Iron Age building traditions were still in use in Hellenistic times.[31]

Fortification walls may be up to almost 5 m wide. They are set on firm ground, on a bedrock surface if possible. The surface was smoothed before in the form of horizontal steps or areas (Fig. 8). The lower part of a fortification wall was always built of large stones. Then sun-dried mud bricks were set onto the stone foundations. Real and false windows, as found at Çavuştepe (Fig. 9), were set into the mud-brick walls higher up. The top of the fortification wall was crenelated. There are no known finds of pinnacles as in Assyria. But from

[24] Burney and Lawson 1960, 186.

[25] Sevin 1997; Mahé 1996, 1291.

[26] Elizabeth Fagan on her excavations at Armavir, Sept 18, 2011: 'The early first millennium BC architecture at the site (e.g. the Urartian temple) was constructed of well-worked stones laid next to each other, sometimes with joins that jogged slightly, but without mortar or clamps or other fasteners between the blocks. In the Hellenistic period, throughout the Mediterranean world, a type of clamp frequently called "swallow-tail" was used. The name comes from the shape; a wedge-shaped hole was made in each block on either side of a join, and when you look at the two stones next to one another, the holes make a bow-tie or swallow-tail shape. A fastener was then inserted across the two stones, linking them. In many cases in the Mediterranean world, the fastener (clamp) was made of metal' (*http://egafagan.com/?cat=3*).

[27] Burney and Lawson 1960, 193.

[28] Kleiss 1976, fig. 13; 2015, 71, fig. 184.

[29] Kroll 1976, 52–57, 167.

[30] Tonikian 1992; Kroll 2012a.

[31] *Contra* Ristvet *et al*. 2012, 333–35, fig. 6.

Fig. 8. Bastam. Rock cuttings for laying the stone foundations of the fortification walls (photograph by M. Salvini).

Fig. 9. Çavuştepe. False stone window to be set into the upper mud-brick wall (photograph by author).

Fig. 10. Toprakkale. Fragment of a bronze relief depicting a fortification wall with windows, crenellated upper part and a separate fragment of a crenellated tower (photograph by author).

bronze reliefs like the Toprakkale relief (Fig. 10) we know how a fortification wall might have looked. The crenelated upper part of the wall was a complicated construction of wooden beams and mud bricks. A fortification wall was built with narrow projecting buttresses at certain intervals (Fig. 11). Rectangular towers may have been used at corners. But often we only find a slightly larger buttress at a corner. Körzüt, built around 800 BC according to inscriptions found there, is an impressive example (Fig. 12).

During his research in Iran, Kleiss was able to show that there was a development in constructing Urartian fortifications. Early sites were small in size, of straight rectangular plan, and showed large rectangular towers. His examples were (especially) Siah Qaleh (Fig. 13), but also Danalu, Oghlu Qaleh, the first phase in Seqindel and Aragac in Armenia.[32] Later fortifications showed more understanding of the natural terrain of a mountainous site. The fortification walls were better adjusted to the original shape of the mountain. In these later constructions big towers were absent, for example at Ayanis or Bastam. A problem for this theory is the big rectangular towers at Karmir-Blur (Fig. 14) and Hasanlu, both late sites of the 7th century BC. But both were built on a flat shallow plain, so big towers were necessary to create better protection. This is especially obvious at Karmir-Blur: the northern side is protected by high cliffs of the River Hrazdan, and no towers were built there.

[32] Kleiss 1976; 1988a.

Fig. 11. Bastam. Fortification wall with narrow buttresses in certain intervals (photograph by author).

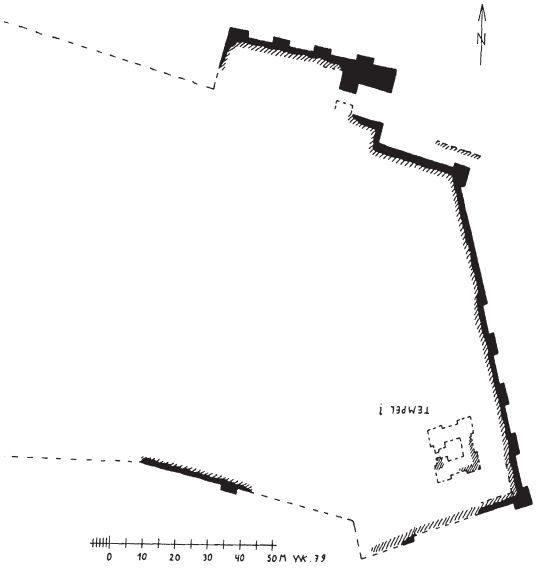

Fig. 12. Körzüt. Plan of the eastern part of the citadel (after Kleiss 1988a).

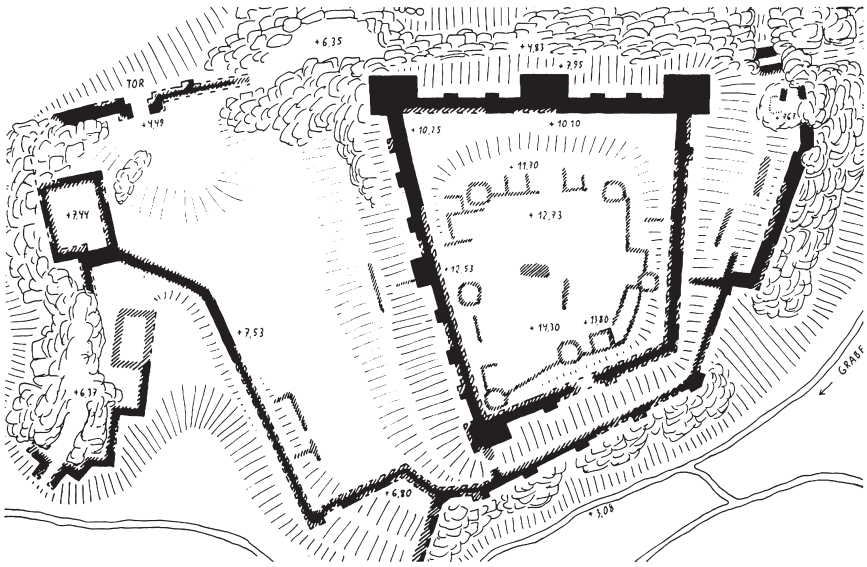

Fig. 13. Siah Qaleh in Maku province in Iran. Example of an early fortification with massive rectangular towers (after Kleiss 1976).

GATES

Every fortified site had at least one major gate, sometimes two as in the case of Bastam and Karmir-Blur. Karmir-Blur also had a much smaller second gate. In Hasanlu IIIc it is probable that only the second gate has been excavated, the main gate still unexcavated in the north-eastern part of the site. Recent research in the Hasanlu archives showed that contrary to the published plans only about a third of the fortification wall was excavated.[33] Gates were constructed in one or two rectangular towers. Solid towers, for example, were used for the gate in Karmir-Blur and the gates at Bastam. One solid tower and another tower with a small chamber inside were in use at Ayanis and at Horom. At least one solid tower was in use at Körzüt. The chamber inside the tower could have been a guardroom. Upper Anzaf had one extremely large and high solid tower.[34] As the towers in Karmir-Blur and Bastam are not built with an inside chamber, the small triangular rooms next to the tower might have been guardrooms (Fig. 14).

[33] See the revised plan in Kroll 2012a, fig. 7.
[34] Belli 1999, 20–24, figs. 10–13.

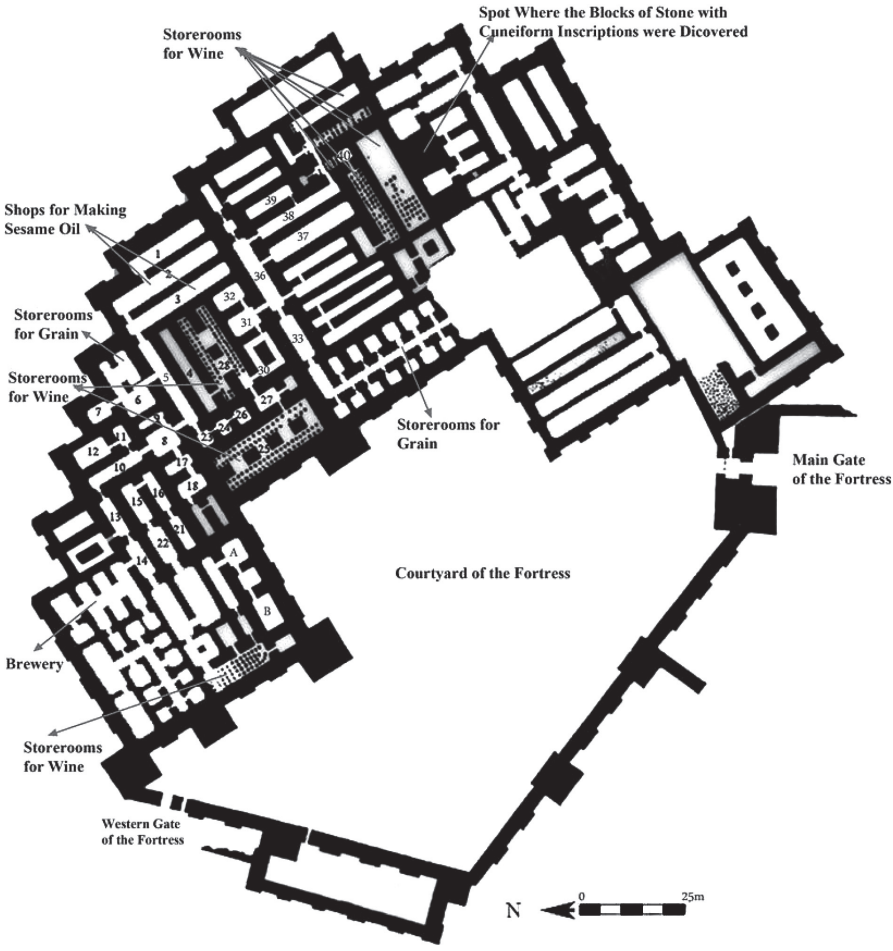

Fig. 14. Plan of the fortress, Karmir-Blur (after Batmaz 2015).

Structures Inside the Fortifications

The three best excavated sites – Ayanis, Karmir-Blur and Bastam – give the impression that they consisted mainly of enormous warehouses for storing food and of cultic areas. Buildings were constructed in several levels, foundation rooms and one or two levels above the first level. Floors and ceilings were laid with horizontal wooden beams covered by wicker and reed with mud mortar in between.[35] As mentioned above, no vaulting is known for any of these buildings.

[35] Baştürk 2012, figs. 25–27.

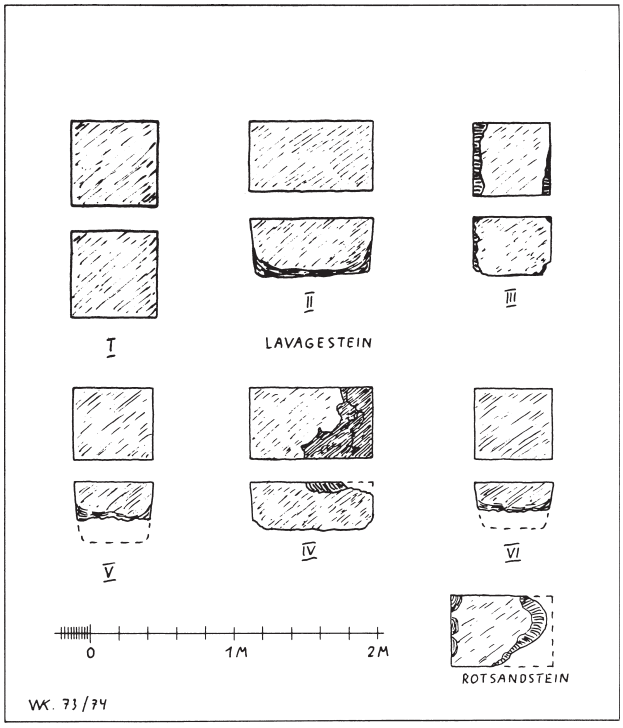

Fig. 15. Bastam. Worked ashlar masonry from the Upper Fortress. Several pieces might have belonged to an arch: II, IV, VI (after Kleiss 1979a, 86).

Some single worked stones at Bastam (Fig. 15) may be a hint that sometimes vaulted doors were built.[36] Certain rooms in Ayanis and Bastam may have been painted in vivid colours, as fragments of painted wall plaster show.[37] Other finds, like the fragment of a leave shaped capital[38] or a fragment of a relief with crenelations,[39] reveal Urartian buildings were furnished with highly advanced elements (Fig. 16).

Unlike Assyria or for the Achaemenid period (Altıntepe Period II palace) no clear residential areas or palaces have been found. Karmir-Blur is full of small rectangular or long narrow storerooms. The temple and other cultic buildings had been constructed at a higher level and were destroyed long ago.[40] Around the temple at Ayanis is a courtyard with rectangular pillars of a clear cultic

[36] Kleiss 1979a, 86, fig. 100.
[37] Baştürk 2012, fig. 18; Kleiss 1988a, 103.
[38] Kleiss 1977, fig. 16b.
[39] Kleiss 1977, fig. 17.
[40] Salvini 1979.

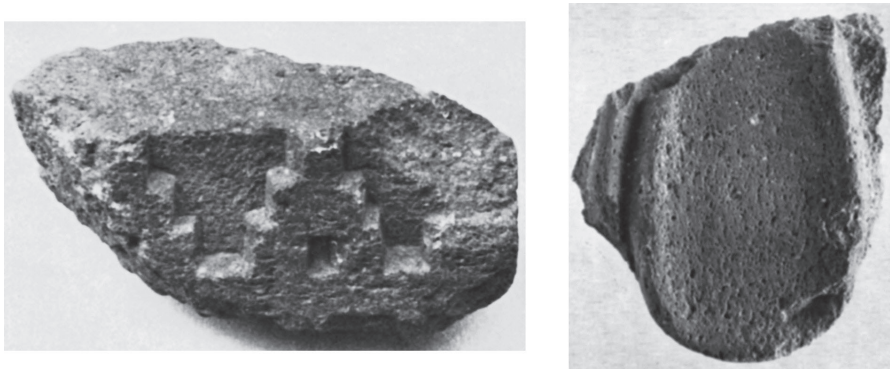

Fig. 16. Bastam. Left: stone relief with crenellations.
Right: stone fragment of a leave shaped capital (after Kleiss 1977, 28–29).

character.[41] Otherwise the site consists mainly of storerooms with masses of storage vessels. Likewise Bastam is full of storage magazines, storage vessels and rooms for different economic activities. Only in the Lower (southern) Fortress are there some buildings that may be called barracks or residential quarters (Fig. 17).[42] A large hall with two rows of rectangular pillars near the southern gate might have been a reception hall. A similar hall with two rows of pillars was excavated at Çavuştepe and might also have been a reception hall.[43]

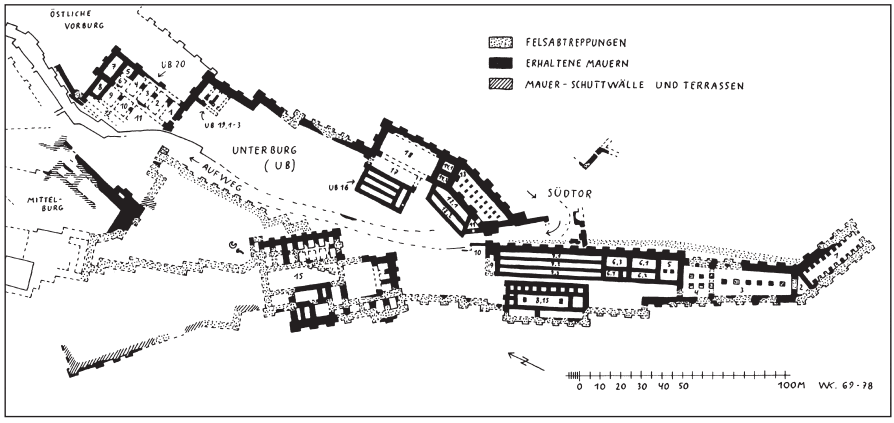

Fig. 17. Bastam. Plan of the Lower Fortress. Building 15 could have been a residence, the double pillar hall 13 a reception hall, 3, 4, 8 possibly barracks for the garrison, the tripartite long hall 7 a stable (after Kleiss 1988a, 51).

[41] Batmaz 2015, figs. 6–9.
[42] Kleiss 1977, 19.
[43] Kleiss 1988b, fig. 13.

Domestic Architecture

Architectural structures outwith fortresses have not been explored in the same way as the fortifications and the structures within. Finds in settlements are not to be expected to be as rich as those inside a fortified residence. Thus only around some Urartian sites have the settlements been excavated: at Armavir, Arin-Berd, Karmir-Blur, Horom, in Hasanlu IIIb and at Bastam. Recently, large areas were uncovered at Ayanis. This is certainly not a representative sample of settlement architecture as most of these settlements date to the end of the kingdom of Urartu in the middle of the 7th century BC or even some time thereafter. However, the excavation results show a surprising variety of buildings. Since Stone and Zimansky started exploring the Urartian settlement around Ayanis our understanding and knowledge of Urartian settlements has increased considerably.[44] They show that there were two kinds of domestic structures: well-constructed houses and flimsy house structures. The latter were previously considered as possibly non-Urartian or post-Urartian. They were built somewhat irregularly, but now it turns out they were clearly Urartian.

Fine constructed buildings, often with outside buttresses, may have been planned by the same architects as for the fortresses (Fig. 18). These buildings might have been used by officials of the court. In contrast with this apparently planned settlement architecture private houses were constructed in a variety of building techniques. None resembles the well-built architecture just described. Buildings are constructed of rough piled-up stones, rooms are often not even rectangular, corners may be round, stone layers are interspersed with mud

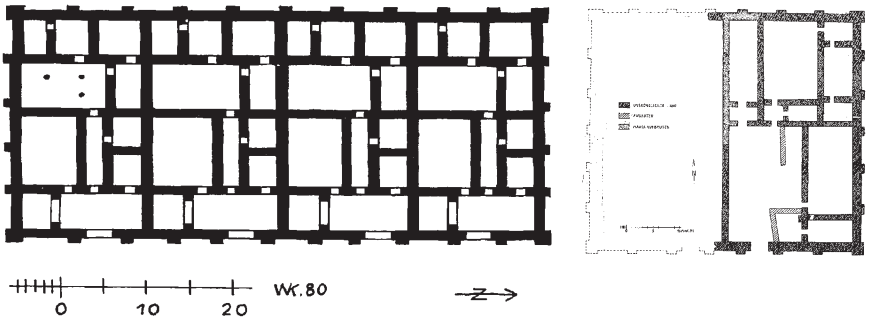

Fig. 18. Karmir-Blur (left); Bastam (right). Planned buildings in the settlement area (after Kleiss 1988a, 198; 2015, 83).

[44] Stone and Zimansky 2003; 2004; 2009; Stone 2012.

layers and on top of them stones again. Examples of these primitive structures have been found at all sites, notably at Ayanis, Bastam and Hasanlu IIIb. Unlike the well-planned houses these unsystematic dwellings contain hearths, bins, storage vessels, small pavements for animal stables and troughs (Figs. 19–21). E. Stone summarised the Ayanis results thus:

> The residents of the Outer Town lived in large and well-appointed houses, some of which were formally built, presumably by state architects, whereas others were less well constructed suggesting that they were built by their residents. These buildings have the same domestic features and the same size ranges as the houses in the area today which are occupied by independent farm owners.[45]

Stables

It is unclear if stables are mentioned in Urartian inscriptions. Sargon II, during his campaign in 714 BC, mentions stables within the fortresses.[46] Small paved areas in private houses, as found in Ayanis and Bastam, certainly served as stabling for sheep or cattle. Official buildings that were used as stables have been found within Urartu only at Bastam so far (Fig. 9). They consist of long tripartite buildings, up to 50 m in length and 10 m in width. While the middle aisle shows a floor of beaten mud, both side aisles are paved with large flagstones.[47] Identical buildings have been excavated in the pre-Urartian period at Hasanlu IVb,[48] but their stratigraphic relation is not absolutely clear.[49] At Bastam two of these tripartite buildings were excavated outside the fortress, one in connection with a large enclosure that might have been a corral (Fig. 22).[50] The official status of this enclosure is enhanced through buttresses along the enclosing wall. A third building was excavated near the southern gate inside the fortification (Fig. 6).

Dams and Canals

Urartian irrigation systems and canals have always fascinated explorers from the 19th century onwards. The dams and canals in the Van region, bringing

[45] Stone 2012, 99.
[46] Zimansky 1983, 44.
[47] Kroll 1989.
[48] Kroll 1992.
[49] Kroll 2012b.
[50] Kleiss 1977, figs. 38–39.

Fig. 19. Hasanlu IIIb. Unsystematic built wall of a private house (photograph courtesy of the Hasanlu project).

Fig. 20. Hasanlu IIIb. Private house with stone pavement (animal stable) and stone lined trough (photograph courtesy of the Hasanlu project).

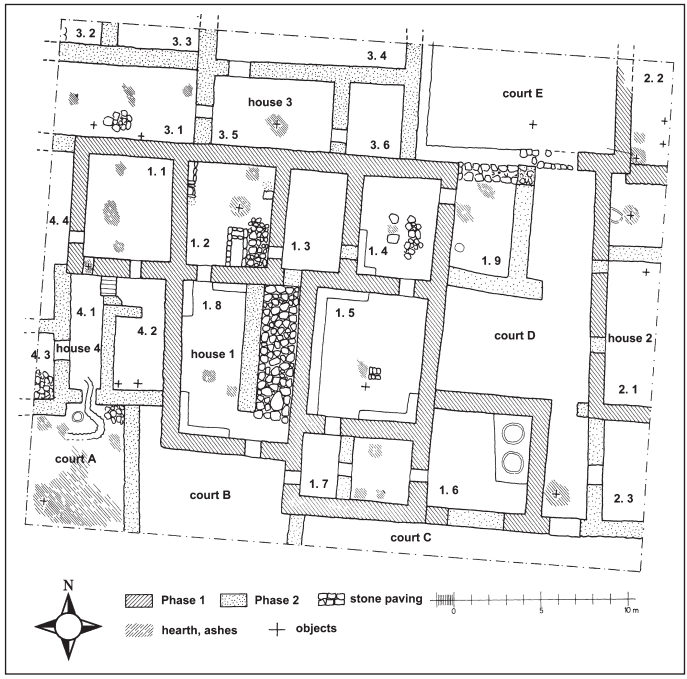

Fig. 21. Bastam settlement. Private houses, pavements for animal stables, hearths, storage vessels, stone lined trough (after Kroll 2013, 252).

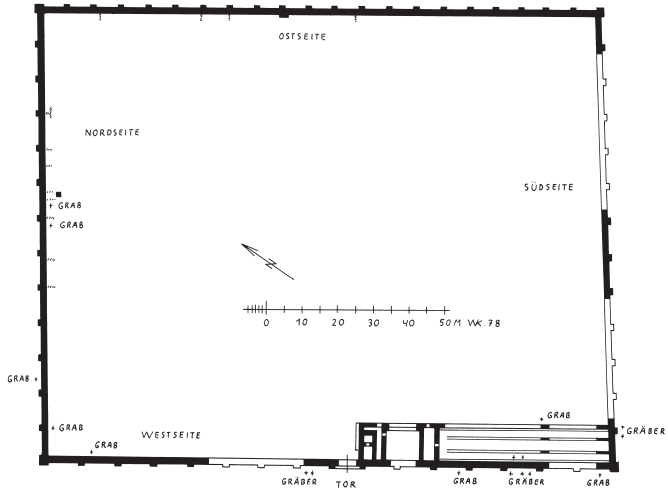

Fig. 22. Bastam. Eastern building in the plain below the fortress. The long paved tripartite hall in the southern corner was used as a stable. The big enclosure with buttresses might have been a corral (after Kleiss 1988a, 16).

Fig. 23. Minua canal passing over the Hoşab Çay, as seen by Lehmann-Haupt 1898 (after Lehmann-Haupt 1926, 98).

water to Van Kalesi and later to Toprakkale, were often described.[51] Many other dams and canals were explored by Belli and published in multiple articles.[52] Without the inscriptions along the so-called Minua canal (Fig. 23), built by king Minua around 800 BC, it would be difficult to call the present-day canal Urartian. Over the centuries stonework was renewed and repaired over and again. This is also true for the Keşiş Göl barrage and canal. Without the inscription by Rusa son of Erimena (730–714 BC) we would have no reason to call the stonework Urartian. As all canals and dams were kept in order for millennia, today they barely show any specific traces of Urartian architecture. In the best sense we may call the stone work cyclopean. In the same way we must be cautious to call any canal or barrage Urartian. They could have been constructed in many other periods too.

Aftermath

When the big centres of the kingdom of Urartu collapsed in the middle of the 7th century BC many of the big fortifications were destroyed by fire or deserted by their inhabitants. However, Urartian architectural tradition did not cease. Fortresses such as Armavir and Evoghlu Qaleh and settlements near

[51] Garbrecht 1980.
[52] Belli 1994; Zimansky 1998, 81–83.

Fig. 24. Gavur Qaleh Khoy. Old Urartian fortress with additions in Hellenistic time (upper part), in the central part rebuilding in medieval time (after Kleiss and Kroll 1978, fig. 9).

the destroyed fortresses were still in use for some time. In some places, as in Van-Höyük, Çavuştepe, Bastam, Arin-Berd and Altıntepe, an occupation in the time of the Medes or the early Achaemenids was found. Big pillared halls, as in Altıntepe or Arin-Berd,[53] show new elements and old traditions, not only in architecture but also in wall-painting. From the mere construction of walls, fortifications or domestic architecture, it is difficult to distinguish Urartian from post-Urartian structures. Even centuries later, in the Hellenistic period, walls were built in the old Urartian way, but now with new features like round towers and zig-zag pattern in the fortification walls.[54] A good example is Gavur Qaleh in the Khoy area. Here the old Urartian fortress continued in occupation, but new fortification walls in a new style combined with traditional workmanship were added in Hellenistic times (Fig. 24).

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[53] Khatchadourian 2016, 141–44.

[54] Kroll 2012a.

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DWELLINGS OF THE GODS: URARTIAN TEMPLES AND SANCTUARIES

Yervand GREKYAN

Abstract

Urartian cuneiform inscriptions often mention about construction of cultic structures, including 'steles', 'gates' and '*susi* temples' for certain gods. Other buildings were also connected with the worship of those gods. These are figuring in the texts as É ('house' of a god), É.DINGIR^{MEŠ} ('house of gods'), É.BÁRA ('shrine', 'sanctuary') or *i̯arani* (a kind of cultic structure). The texts also mention some other architectural structures, such as $^{(É)}$*adunusi*, ^{É}*sir(i)hani*, ^{É}*ṭulurini*, ^{É}*ašihusi*, etc., which were possibly connected in some way with the worship of gods.

In contrast to this illusory diversity, the cultic structures in the Urartian kingdom were usually devoted to Haldi, the head of the Urartian pantheon. Those include the 'steles of Haldi', the 'house of Haldi', the 'gate of Haldi', the 'sanctuary of Haldi' and the '*susi*' temple of Haldi'. The latter is the main if not the only architectural structure which could be definitely identified as a 'temple'. However strange it may seem, apart from a few attestations, mostly dated to the earlier, 'formative' period of the kingdom, the texts do not provide strong evidence about the existence of any important temple or cultic structure devoted to other deities than Haldi, even in the cities, which were named after other gods, like Teisheba, the storm god. One may even insist that the concept of 'temple' in Urartu should be understood as 'temple of Haldi'.

The Urartian temple-building mindset was formed under the heavy influence of Haldi-centred ideology. As Haldi was a mountain-god or a hero born from the mountain, the standard Urartian temple, as an architectural model, embodied a mountain or a cliff, and the 'gates' led to the 'house' where that god lived.

INTRODUCTION

The 'gate of Haldi', erected in the vicinity of Van Fortress (ancient Tushpa), which in subsequent Armenian tradition figures under the name of 'Mheri duṛ' ('Mher's door'; other names include 'Meher Kapısı', 'Taşkapı' or 'Kapalı kapı' in Turkish) is the key source for the study of the pantheon of the Urartian state (Figs. 1–2). It has an extensive list of sacrifices dedicated to various deities compiled on behalf of Ishpuini (*ca*. 830–810 BC) and his son Minua (*ca*. 810–790 BC), the kings of Urartu.[1]

[1] *KUKN* 38; *CTU* I, A 3-1.

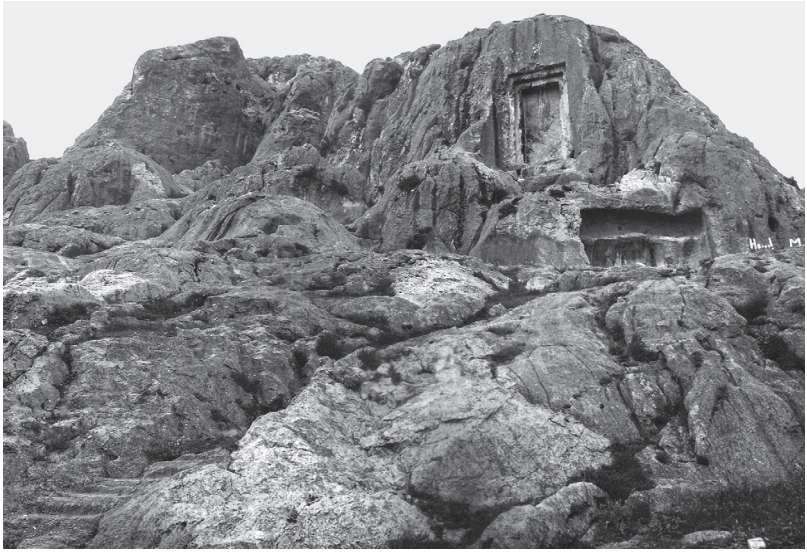

Fig. 1. The ‘gate of Haldi’ or ‘Meher Kapısı’, general view (photograph by S. Deschamps).

Fig. 2. Part of the inscription carved on the rocky surface of the ‘gate of Haldi’ (photograph by S. Deschamps).

The list of the gods includes 48 names, not counting the nameless deities of 'lands', 'mountains', 'lakes/waters', and 'the gods of sacrifices', as well as various deified aspects of the god Haldi.[2] Supposedly the sacrifices listed in the text refer to more than 70 deities, some of which are mentioned under general names, for instance the ^{d}*aḫinili* and ^{d}*inuanili* groups that probably consist of four and 17 deities respectively.[3] It is still unknown what should be understood by the phrase 'to all of the gods' (DINGIR^{MEŠ} UKKIN^{MEŠ}) which is more reminiscent of an abstract idea, like 'the Thousand Gods' (DINGIR-*LIM*) used by the Hittites.

Naturally, all of these gods had their places of worship and centres, their 'houses'. One of the first researchers was Georgi Melikishvili, a specialist in Urartian studies during the Soviet period, who considered Musasir (Ardini in Urartian texts) not only as a centre of worship of the god Haldi, the chief deity in the Urartian pantheon, but also as the cradle of the Urartians themselves.[4] By saying 'the god of the city of Qumenu' mentioned in the list of gods of the Meher Kapısı inscription, he meant the god Teisheba and the city of Kumme/Qumenu as the centre of worship of that god, and by saying 'the god of the city of Tushpa', he meant the god Shivini and Tushpa as his place of worship.[5] Like Nicolas Adontz, who was trying to find native gods in the pantheon (for instance, by considering the city of Shebeteria as the centre of worship of the god Shebitu, or by relating the name of the god Nalaini with the name of Mt Nal/Nala),[6] Melikishvili connected the name of the god Qilibani with the land of Qilbani (in fact, a mountain), and the name of the god Zi(u)quni with that of the land of Ziuquni.[7] Another name of a god related to a specific geographical area could have been Adaruta.[8] The Meher Kapısı inscription mentions also the temples/sanctuaries of deities in certain cities, such as 'the gate of the storm god of the city of Eridia/Erdia' (^{d}IM KÁ ^{URU}*er/iridiani* / ^{URU}*er/irdiḫa*), 'the gate of the sun god of the city of Uishini (^{d}UTU KÁ ^{URU}*uishinini*) or 'the gate of god Ua of the city of Nishi[…] ni' (^{d}*uainaue* KÁ ^{URU}*nishi[…]ni*).[9]

[2] *KUKN* 38 Text I$_{7, 15}$, Text II$_{10, 26}$; *CTU* I, A 3-1$_{7, 15, 41, 57}$.
[3] S. Hmayakyan 1990, 24–27.
[4] Melikishvili 1947; 1948.
[5] Melikishvili 1954, 367–68.
[6] Adontz 1946, 225–26.
[7] Melikishvili 1954, 35, 108; Riemschneider 1963, 156.
[8] Salvini 1993, 547; 1994, 206–07.
[9] *KUKN* 38 Text I$_{16, 20}$, Text II$_{28, 35–36}$; *CTU* I, A 3-1$_{16, 20, 59, 66–67}$.

Unfortunately, very little is known about those cities; they have not been identified yet in terms of archaeology, and the location of some of them is merely approximate. One thing is certain, however: they lay in the southern parts of the highlands, in the border zone between the eastern Taurus and northern Mesopotamia, or in other words, outside the heartland of the Urartian state. Qumenu, the city of Kumme of ancient Near Eastern sources, is located somewhere near to Mt Judi;[10] Eridia may be identified with Irride,[11] one of the political-religious centres of the kingdom of Mitanni that was also famous with its temple of the storm god[12] (and, probably, survived also during the early Neo-Assyrian period); it is possible to identify the city of Uishi/e, known from the Meher Kapısı inscription as well as from two other Urartian texts,[13] with the city of Uesi[14] – the latter was situated on the south-western side of Lake Urmia and is well attested in Neo-Assyrian sources of the period of Sargon II;[15] and Musasir is traditionally located in almost the same area, near to modern Rowanduz.[16]

It is interesting that this region corresponds with the primary worship area of the main Urartian gods. On the one hand, this clarifies the inclusion of local centres of worship of gods in the list of the Meher Kapısı inscription, and on the other also prompts questions about the southern origins of the creators of the Urartian state.

The First 'Temples'

In the third quarter of the 9th century BC the kingdom of Urartu had not yet been formed as a unified, centralised state and represented an alliance of different political units of the 'Lands of Nairi' united under the royal power of Biainili. The alliance took the step of developing a pantheon of the lands of Nairi, and the list of gods of the 'Meher Kapısı' inscription was the first and last attempt to have a common, structured pantheon. This artificial structure was to be forgotten soon, like the title 'king of the land of Nairi' carried by Ishpuini, king of Biainili.[17]

[10] For discussion, see Radner 2012, 254–57 (with cited literature), fig. 17.01.
[11] Grekyan 2006, 168, n. 151 (with cited literature).
[12] Schwemer 2008, 4.
[13] *KUKN* 39_5, 79 Vo_8; *CTU* I, A 5-23 Vo_8; 3-10_5.
[14] van Loon 1975, 205–07.
[15] For example, Parpola 1987, nos. 29–30; Lanfranchi and Parpola 1990, nos. 86–89, etc.
[16] Radner 2012, 245–54 (with cited literature), fig. 17.01.
[17] *KUKN* 30, Assyr. $Text_{3,\ 16}$; *CTU* I, A 3-11 $Vo_{3,\ 16}$; *CTU* IV, B 2-7A-E.

It is not a coincidence that the first steps of moving forward a certain group of deities in the pantheon, perhaps those who can be considered 'native gods', were already taken during the reign of Ishpuini; they were completed under his successor Minua. One can suppose that by the end of Minua's reign the pantheon of the Urartian state had little in common with the list of gods defined by Meher Kapısı inscription and was limited to no more than two dozen deities.[18] The erection in different parts of the state of inscribed stone steles (Urart. $^{(NA4)}$*pulusi*) devoted to the gods from that group was a manifestation of the religious policy of these kings, which could also have been a direct expression of investing the worship of new deities in new territories.[19] Another question is why the gods were 'exported' in the form of steles (Fig. 3).

It is known that in Urartu such monuments were of high importance in terms of worship.[20] Most probably they were survivals of primordial beliefs that a stele could be considered either as a cliff or a mountain, a tree, a spike or all together, generally relating to the worship of fertility. Therefore the steles reflected all those ideas of the supernatural that had not yet been divided into individual divine powers, and the deity that embodied that power had not yet received a more understandable human visage and portrait.

Fig. 3. Urartian stele, discovered in the 1950s, during the reconstruction works of the Etchmiadzin Cathedral, near Yerevan, Armenia.

[18] Grekyan 2006, 157–65.

[19] Grekyan 2006, 150–53, table 1.

[20] In detail, Riemschneider 1965, 331–33; Diakonoff 1983, 191; S. Hmayakyan 1990, 69–70; Salvini 1993; 1995, 168–70; Çevik 1999, 344–47.

In the border area between the eastern Taurus and northern Mesopotamia mentioned above such monuments were known even earlier and they can be seen in a number of sites of the region, including Qal'aṭ Sherqat (Assur),[21] Hasanlu[22] and Mudjesir.[23] Taking into consideration the possible origins of the group of the Urartian native gods from the same region, it would be natural to assume that the tradition of erecting steles in Urartu might have originated in this area as well (Fig. 4).[24] The phenomenon of erecting stone steles in the temple of Assur, which posthumously(?) represented different kings and functionaries of the Assyrian state, could be connected in certain ways with the worship of the god Assur (Fig. 5). Those monuments were called *ṣalmu* ('image', 'statue') just like in Urartu: the text inscribed on one of the Urartian steles talks about an image of Haldi (NU-*ni* ^{d}*haldini*).[25]

The areas where we come across groups of the first Urartian steles can be considered as distinctive landscapes, sacred places, where the gods live. One of these open-air sanctuaries, that are believed to be the most ancient in Urartu, is in Pagan/Yeşilalıç (Ashotakert/Ashrut-darga). Here, near the 'gate of Haldi', six rock-cut sockets for steles have been preserved.[26] Another such place was located in Karahan (the city of Arsuniuini in the Urartian texts?) where a group of sculptures with eight steles was excavated.[27] An open-air sanctuary comprising four steles was opened in Altıntepe (Figs. 6–7).[28] Another three steles were found from Aznavurtepe.[29] Such sanctuaries were excavated also in Tushpa[30] and in Haykaberd/Çavuştepe (Urartian: Sardurihinili).[31] On some Urartian seals, priests(?) are depicted standing with three steles and sacred trees (Figs. 8–9).[32]

[21] Andrae 1913. For discussion, see Saporetti 1974; Miglus 1984; Dalley 1986, 88; Reade 2004; etc.

[22] Dyson 1977, 551–52; 1989, 116–18, figs. 1, 12, 14.

[23] Boehmer 1973, Taf. 11.3, 12.1–4, 13.1–2, 14.1–5; 1979, Taf. 26b, 27a–b. For ancient Near Eastern parallels, see Canby 1976; Hutter 1993; F. Işık 1995, 60–63; etc. See also Burney and Lang 1971, 149.

[24] See also Çilingiroğlu 1997, 106.

[25] *KUKN* 20a Text I_{20}, II_{20}. *Cf. CTU* I, A 2-9A_{20}; etc.

[26] Sevin and Belli 1977, 373–74, res. 2, lev. VII.1–2.

[27] Dinçol and, Kavaklı 1978a; 1978b.

[28] Özgüç 1969, 28–33, 73–74, figs. 29–33, pls. 26–27.

[29] Bora 2007.

[30] F. Işık 1995, 1, 60–61, Abb. 161; Tarhan 1994, 28–29, figs. 5–7; 2011, 322–25, fig. 20a–d; etc.

[31] For example, F. Işık 1995, 47–48, 60–61, Abb. 159–160, 162–163.

[32] Lehmann-Haupt 1907, 82, fig. 54. See also C. Işık 1986; Calmeyer 1991, 317, fig. 5; Çevik 1999, 344 and nn. 50–52, lev. IIa–b, etc.

Fig. 4. The steles of Hasanlu (photograph by author).

Fig. 5. The so-called 'shrine of Steles' discovered at Assur (after Andrae 1913, Blatt 6).

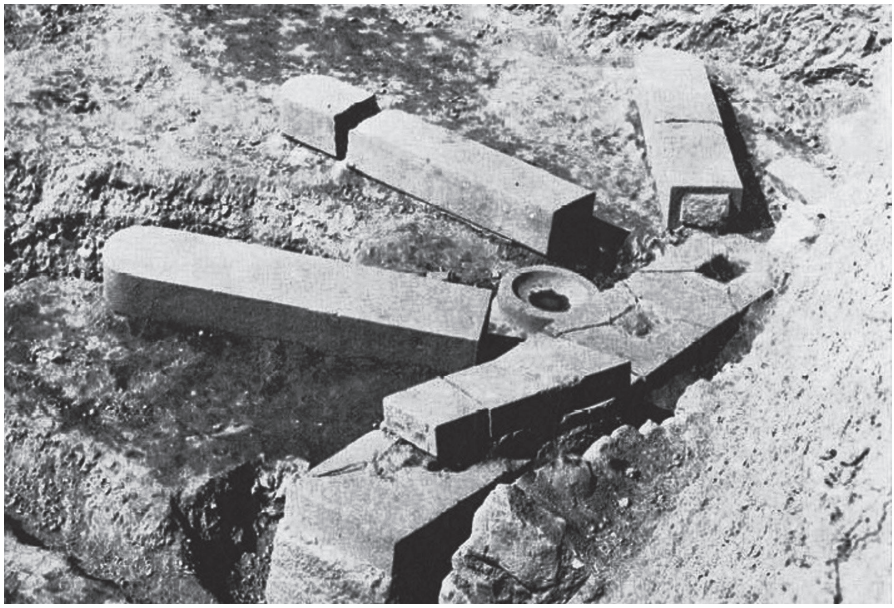

Fig. 6. The open-air sanctuary with four steles uncovered during the excavations at the Urartian fortress of Altıntepe (after Özgüç 1969, pl. 26.1).

Most probably it was such sacred places that were attested in the inscriptions of Ishpuini and Minua as *ṭeribišuzi*,[33] a kind of structure named a 'shrine of Steles' by Mirjo Salvini.[34] The picture that we have of Urartian open-air sanctuaries reminds us of the information given by Herodotus about the Persians, according to which, initially the Persians did not have temples, and rituals were conducted in open-air (Herodotus 1. 131). Similarly, *ayādanā* of the Old-Persian text of Behistun, which means 'a place of worship'[35] ('the house of gods' (*é.˹meš˺ šá dingir.meš*), as it is attested in the Babylonian version of the same inscription),[36] could also have been an open-air sanctuary.[37]

Supposedly, during the early Urartian period a stele embodied not only the god whose name was inscribed on it, but also the 'house' where that god lived. It seems possible to consider the steles erected in Urartu as the first religious 'constructions' that a bit later, during the 'imperial' period would acquire their specific definition of an architectural construction.

[33] *KUKN* 20a, 41+42, 172a; *CTU* I, A 2-9 A, B; A 5-28; A 5-30; A 5-31.
[34] Salvini 1993, 547.
[35] Schmitt 2009, 46(F).
[36] Malbran-Labat 1994, 95, 110 (§ 13).
[37] Boyce 1983, 429.

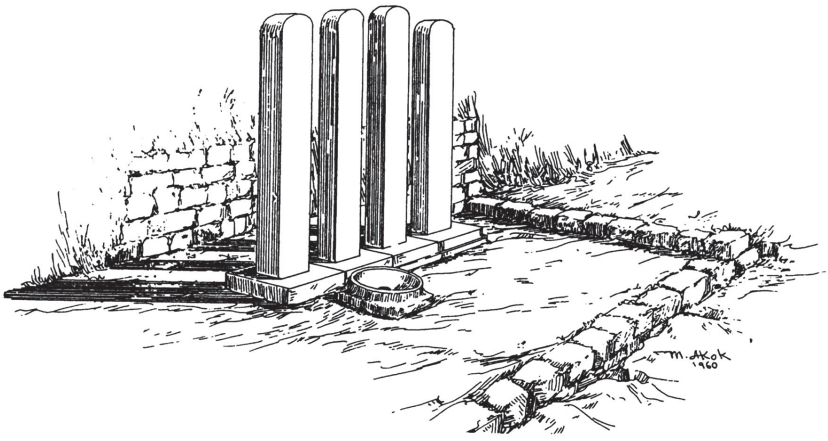

Fig. 7. Reconstruction of the open-air sanctuary of Altıntepe (after Özgüç 1969, res. 29).

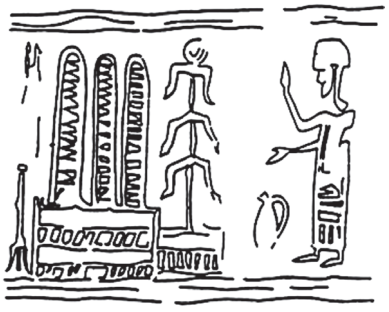

Fig. 8. Seal impression depicting libation rite performed in front of steles and 'Sacred Tree', Toprakkale (after C. Işık 1986, fig. 1).

Fig. 9. Seal impression depicting libation rite performed in front of steles and 'Sacred Tree', Elâzığ Museum (after C. Işık 1986, fig. 2a).

Types of Temples and Sanctuaries in Urartian Cuneiform Sources

$^{(GIŠ)}$KÁ$^{(MEŠ)}$

The most common and earliest worship structures in Urartu were the ‘gate(s)’. They were called *šeštili* in Urartian, but almost always in the texts it was written in Sumerogram – $^{(GIŠ)}$KÁ. Twenty-eight texts witnessing the construction of ‘gate(s)’ have been preserved in the corpus of the Urartian inscriptions, beginning in the reign of Ishpuini son of Sarduri up to Rusa son of Argishti. It is notable that the prevailing part of the references belongs to the reign(s) of Ishpuini and Minua (23 texts, see Table 1). And though the texts of a later period, especially those related to the extensive city-building programmes realised by Rusa son of Argishti have not been preserved intact, and the references to the establishment of ‘gate(s)’ would naturally be more numerous, we can state that Ishpuini and Minua were the most enthusiastic figures and that the main part of Urartian worship constructions were erected under them.[38]

Urartian Temples and Sanctuaries						
Source			**Provenance**	**Type of Structure**		
				KÁ / *šeštili*	$^{(É)}$*susi*	*i̯arani*
Ishpuini son of Sarduri						
1.		*CTU* I, A 2-9A	Karahan	×	–	–
2.	*KUKN* 20A	*CTU* I, A 2-9B	Karahan	×	–	–
Ishpuini son of Sarduri, and Minua son of Ishpuini						
1.	*KUKN* 38 I-II	*CTU* I, A 3-1	Mheri duṛ/Meher Kapısı	×	–	–
2.	*KUKN* 36	*CTU* I, A 3-2	Ashotakert/Yeşilalıç	–	×	–
3.	*KUKN* 37	*CTU* I, A 3-3	Mokhraberd/Muchrapert	×	–	–
4.	*KUKN* 30	*CTU* I, A 3-11 Ro	Kelishin	×	–	×
5.	*KUKN* 38b	*CTU* I, A 3-12	Badnots/Patnos(?)	–	×	–
Ishpuini son of Sarduri, Minua son of Ishpuini and Inushpua son of Minua						
1.	*KUKN* 20	*CTU* I, A 4-1	Van	×	×	–
Minua son of Ishpuini						
1.		*CTU* I, A 5-2A-F	Gorcot/Körzüt	×	×	–
2.	*KUKN* 56	*CTU* I, A 5-5	Balu/Palu	–	–	×
3.	*KUKN* 148	*CTU* I, A 5-11A	Aznavurtepe	×	–	–
4.	*KUKN* 101	*CTU* I, A 5-25 Ro	Badnots/Patnos(?)	×	–	–
5.	*KUKN* 48	*CTU* I, A 5-27	Tsolakert/Taşburun	×	–	–

[38] See also Grekyan 2006, 150–51, tables 1–2.

Source			Provenance	Type of Structure		
				KÁ / *šeštili*	(É)*susi*	*i̯arani*
6.	*KUKN* 172a	*CTU* I, A 5-28 Ro	Karahan	×	–	–
7.	*KUKN* 41×42	*CTU* I, A 5-30 Ro	Berkri/Muradiye	×	–	–
8.	*KUKN* 40	*CTU* I, A 5-31 Ro	*unknown*	×	–	–
9.	*KUKN* 82	*CTU* I, A 5-33	Gyuzak/Köşk	×	–	–
10.	*KUKN* 150	*CTU* I, A 5-37	Aznavurtepe	×	–	–
11.	*KUKN* 172b	*CTU* I, A 5-42A 1.d.	Andzav/Upper Anzaf	–	×	–
12.	*KUKN* 88	*CTU* I, A 5-42B 1.s	Andzav/Upper Anzaf	–	×	–
13.	*KUKN* 172b	*CTU* I, A 5-42C 1.d	Andzav/Upper Anzaf	–	×	–
14.	*KUKN* 89	*CTU* I, A 5-43	Andzav/Upper Anzaf	–	×	–
15.	Işık, 2015, 61–71		Andzav/Upper Anzaf	–	×	–
16.	*KUKN* 141	*CTU* I, A 5-44	Shushants/Kevenli	×	×	–
17.	*KUKN* 92	*CTU* I, A 5-45A	Shushants/Kevenli	×	–	–
18.		*CTU* I, A 5-45B	Shushants/Kevenli	×	–	–
19.	*KUKN* 94	*CTU* I, A 5-46A	Shushants/Kevenli	×	–	–
20.	*KUKN* 95	*CTU* I, A 5-46B	Shushants/Kevenli	×	–	–
21.	*KUKN* 91	*CTU* I, A 5-47	Koghbants/Kobanıs	×	×	–
22.	*KUKN* 105	*CTU* I, A 5-48f. f.$_{3–5, f. d. 1}$	Koghbants/Kobanıs	×	–	–
23.	*KUKN* 97	*CTU* I, A 5-50$_{3–4}$	Norgegh/Norkiuch	×	–	–
24.	*KUKN* 90	*CTU* I, A 5-51$_{3}$	Manazkert/Malazgirt	–	×	–
25.		*CTU* I, A 5-52$_{2–4}$	Başkale	–	×	–
Argishti son of Minua						
1.	*KUKN* 195	*CTU* I, A 8-21A$_{1–2}$	Arin-Berd (Erebuni)	–	×	–
2.	*KUKN* 196	*CTU* I, A 8-21B$_{1–3}$	Arin-Berd (Erebuni)	–	×	–
3.		*CTU* I, A 8-22$_{2–3}$	Kepenek, Mush	–	×	–
Sarduri son of Argishti						
1.	*KUKN* 269	*CTU* I, A 9-15$_{4–6}$	Armavir (Argishtihinili)	×	–	–
2.	*KUKN* 271	*CTU* I, A 9-16$_{1–2}$	Davti-Blur (Argishtihinili)	×	×	–
3.	*KUKN* 247	*CTU* I, A 9-17$_{1–4}$	Haykaberd/Çavuştepe	–	×	–
4.		*CTU* I, A 9-18$_{2–3}$	Bahçecik	–	×	–
Rusa son of Sarduri						
1.	*KUKN* 388	*CTU* I, A 10-1$_{4–5}$	Gavar	×	–	–
Rusa son of Argishti						
1.		*CTU* I, A 12-1$_{1-2}$	Ayants/Ayanis	×	×	–
2.	*KUKN* 424	*CTU* I, A 12-2 I$_{1-2}$	Karmir-Blur	×	×	–

The construction of ‘gates’ in Urartu was connected with the worship of Haldi and they were generally called ‘gate(s) of Haldi’ (^{d}*haldiei* $^{(GIŠ)}$KÁ). This is not accidental as they symbolised the entrance of the ‘house’ where Haldi lived. The ‘house’ was identified with a cliff/mountain: Haldi himself was a mountain-god, a deity whose worship was definitely connected with a cliff or a hero born from the cliffs.[39]

The ‘gate(s)’ as an architectural structure emerged during the reign of Ishpuini. Time preserved three such rock-cut structures, the most ancient of which is known as Hazine Piri Kapısı.[40] The other two, which are more impressive in size, were constructed during the so-called ‘co-regency’ of Ishpuini and Minua. The first is the ‘gate of Haldi’ at Pagan/Yeşilalıç, on the slopes of Mt Nazarabad (Fig. 10);[41] the other ‘gate’ was constructed near Tushpa, the capital city of the empire.[42] The latter is the famous Meher Kapısı with its extensive inscription listing the sacrifices for gods.

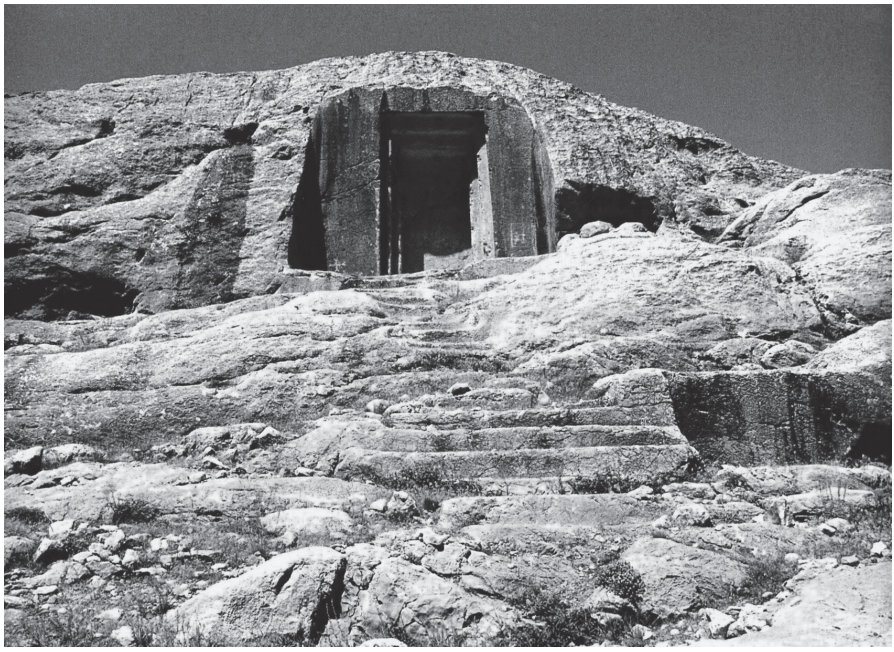

Fig. 10. The ‘gate of Haldi’ at Ashotakert/Yeşilalıç, general view (photograph by S. Deschamps).

[39] Diakonoff 1983, 192; Petrosyan 2004, 47; Grekyan 2015, 388.
[40] Belli and Dinçol 1980, 167–90, lev. VI–IX; Belli 2004, 105–06.
[41] Sevin and Belli 1977, 367–93, lev IV.3, V.1, 3; Belli 2004, 106–09.
[42] Salvini 1994, 205–06; Belli 2004, 109–17; etc.

$^{(É)}$*susi*

The main architectural structure which definitely served as a temple was called '*susi*' in Urartian.[43] So far we have 19 pieces of written evidence informing about the construction of *susi* temples in Urartu. The earliest records refer to the period of the joint rule of Ishpuini and Minua. The first archaeologically attested temple is known from the Urartian fortress of Upper Anzaf,[44] built by Minua.[45] As in case of the steles and 'gates', here also the majority of records refer to the period of the reign(s) of Ishpuini and Minua, which once again certifies that the construction of cultic structures and steles forming parts of worship of Haldi in the initial period of state existence could have been due to the consistent policy of those Biainilian kings, highlighting the spread of the worship of Haldi in conquered territories from one angle, and the political power of the god Haldi, from another.[46]

The number of archaeologically recorded *susi* temples may reach 18. These sites include Upper Anzaf fortress,[47] Körzüt,[48] Aznavurtepe,[49] Arin-Berd (Erebuni),[50] Armavir (Argishtihinili),[51] Haykaberd/Çavuştepe (Sardurihinili) with its two temples,[52] Kayalıdere,[53] Altıntepe,[54] Karmir-Blur ('the city of Teisheba of the land of Waza'),[55] Toprakkale ('Rusahinilli Qilbanikai'),[56] Bastam ('Rusa's Small City'),[57] Ayanis ('Rusahinilli Eidurukai').[58] There was certainly a *susi* temple in Adılcevaz–Kef Kalesi ('the City of Haldi of the land of Ziuquni').[59] There were probably *susi* temples in Livar[60] and Verahram,[61]

[43] See Kleiss 1963–64; 1988, 187–91, Abb. 18–27; 1989, fig. 4; Özgüç 1966, 39–44; Burney 1966, 73–75; Ussishkin 1994; Stronach 1967, 278–82, and also n. 29 (for bibliography); 2012, 309–15; Tarhan and Sevin 1975, 390, n. 1 (for bibliography); Rehm 2004; Tanyeri-Erdemir 2007, 205–08 and n. 5; Çilingiroğlu 2012; etc.
[44] Belli 1999, 25.
[45] F. Işık 2015, 65–68.
[46] Grekyan 2006, 152–53 and n. 25.
[47] Belli 1999, 24–28, figs. 14–16.
[48] Tarhan and Sevin 1977, 283–84, fig. 1.
[49] Balkan 1960, 99–103, 134–37; 1964, 237–39, figs. 1–2; Boysal 1961, 200–01, pl. 2.
[50] Hovhannisyan 1961, 32–37, figs. 11–14; 1980, 49–56, figs. 39–40.
[51] Karapetyan 2010, 36–43, fig. 4.
[52] Erzen 1977, 6–14, res. 8–12, lev. VII–IX; 1978, 8–11, lev. VIIIb.
[53] Burney 1966, 68–71, pls. 5–6.
[54] Özgüç 1963, 45–46, 53–54, plans 2–3, pls. XII–XIII; etc.
[55] Dan 2010.
[56] Erzen 1977, 19, res. 17, lev. XI.2, XII.1–3.
[57] Kleiss 1972, 32–34, Abb. 27; Salvini 2005.
[58] Çilingiroğlu 2001.
[59] Seidl 1974; Salvini 2004.
[60] Kleiss and Kroll 1977, 57.
[61] Kleiss 1974, 91, Abb. 11.

maybe also in Qalatgah.[62] The cuneiform inscription known from Kevenli also mention the existence of a *susi* temple there.[63]

É

This Sumerogram means 'house', and the majority of its uses refer to the 'house of Haldi'.[64] As for now it is difficult to mention what this structure was like. The structure excavated in Erebuni, which has on its wall an *in situ* inscription about the construction of a 'house' for Haldi by Argishti son of Minua,[65] was presented as a four-sided tower-like structure with an adjacent 'portico'.[66] Meanwhile, the recent excavations in Erebuni gradually reveal a totally different architectural picture of the fortress in contrast with that reconstructed in the Soviet period.[67] It is hoped that further excavations will provide more and clearer ideas about the architectural view of the 'house' of Haldi. Whatever emerges, the expressed opinion about the identity of the 'house' of Haldi and *susi* temple should not be excluded.[68] Here it is important to note that the 'house' of Haldi in Erebuni had a monumental niche, a symbolic door.[69]

É.DINGIR^{MEŠ}

A temple called the 'house of gods' (Assyr. *bīt ilāni*^{MEŠ}) was recorded in Musasir and was mentioned in the Assyrian versions of the bilingual inscriptions of Rusa son of Sarduri.[70] Urartian texts use the Sumerogram É.BÁRA as an equivalent.[71] It is hard to state definitely whether this temple expressed traditions of Urartian temple-building or, *vice versa*, whether Urartian temple-building architecture had been influenced by the temple of Musasir. The only depiction of the latter is preserved on one of the stone slabs of the palace of

[62] Kleiss and Kroll 1977, 71.
[63] Salvini 1979; Belli and Salvini 2004, 164–65.
[64] For example, *KUKN* $200_{1–3}$, $201_{1–3}$, $269_{1–4}$, etc.; *CTU* I, A 8-$18_{1–3}$, A 8-$19_{1–3}$, A 9-$15_{1–4}$, 12-1 II_{9}, etc.
[65] *KUKN* 202; *CTU* I, A8-24.
[66] Hovhannisyan 1961, 51–54, figs. 25a–b, 27; 1980, 59–65, 45–46.
[67] Stronach *et al*. 2010; Deschamps *et al*. 2011; 2012.
[68] Hovhannisyan 1968, 11; *KUKN* 200, n. 1.
[69] Stronach *et al*. 2010, 110–12, tables 32.2, 33.1–2; Deschamps *et al*. 2011, 127, figs. 2, 4, table 18.1.
[70] *KUKN* 387, Assyr. $Text_{12}$; *CTU* I, A 10-3 $Vo_{41'}$, A 10-4 $Vo_{14'}$, A 10-5 $Vo_{11'}$.
[71] *KUKN* 387_{12}; *CTU* I, A 10-3 Ro_{58}, A 10-5 $Ro_{12'}$.

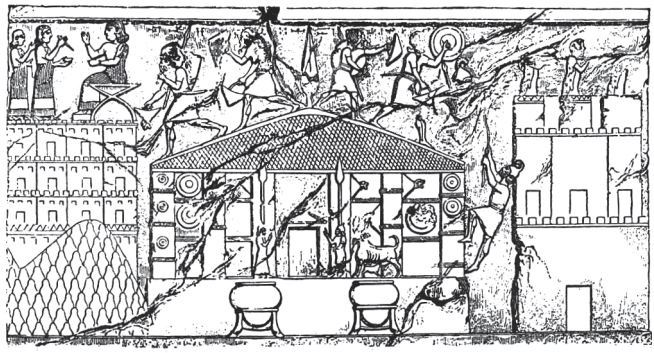

Fig. 11. Relief from Sargon II's palace at Khorsabad, Room XIII, depicting the temple of Haldi at Musasir (after Botta and Flandin 1849, pl. 141).

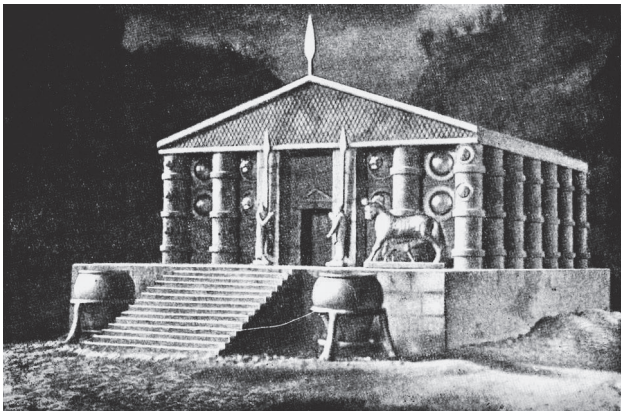

Fig. 12. Reconstruction of the temple of Haldi at Musasir (after Trever 1953, table 64).

Khorsabad, depicting the invasion and plunder of Musasir (Fig. 11),[72] and serve as grounds for various reconstructions of the architectural features of the temple (Fig. 12).[73]

[72] Botta and Flandin 1849, pls. 142–43.

[73] Trever 1953, 73–75, table 64; Stronach 1967, 281–82; Ussishkin 1994, 147; Boehmer 1993–97; Çilingiroğlu 2012, 300–301, pl. Va.

É.BÁRA

This Sumerogram used by Urartian scribes means 'sanctuary'.[74] Three out of eight so far known records precisely refer to Haldi's 'sanctuary' ([d]*haldiei* É.BÁRA).[75] In all other cases it seems to refer to the complex of structures which could cover even a whole 'city'. Particularly, the biggest Urartian fortress Bastam, named 'Rusa's Small City' ([m]*rusai* URU.TUR), figures as É.BÁRA.[76] Both this and other uses of É.BÁRA imply[77] that the Sumerogram used in the Urartian texts had a general meaning, and there is no need to imply by it a certain architectural cultic structure.[78] Moreover, it may be supposed that the Urartian cities might have been considered and was apparently considered as a 'sanctuary' of the god Haldi.

i̯arani

This structure is mentioned in the Urartian version of the bilingual inscription of Kelishin.[79] The Assyrian text provides *parakku* as parallel for the given word,[80] which has many meanings such as 'pedestal', 'sanctuary', 'shrine', etc.[81] In Urartian epigraphy *i̯arani* is mentioned once more in the rock-cut inscription of Minua describing his campaign towards the western borders of the kingdom. It states that the Urartian king built an *i̯arani* of Haldi in the conquered city of Shebeteria.[82] It is interesting to mention that both attestations refer to the furthest regions of the state. Not a single text found from different regions of Urartu proper records this structure, which could imply that it was not typical of Urartian architecture.[83]

[74] Borger 1978, 143 (no. 344).
[75] *KUKN* 247_{3}, 424_{12}; *CTU* I, A 12-1 II_{6-7}, A12-2 II_{1}, A 12-3_{5}.
[76] *KUKN* $419_{1–2}$; *CTU* I, A 12-$7_{1–2}$.
[77] *Cf. CTU* I, A 9-17_{3}, A 12-1 $VI_{6–7}$, A 12-4 $II_{3'}$, A 12-$9_{5–6}$.
[78] See also Erzen 1977, 13–14; Grekyan 2017, 110. *Cf.* S. Hmayakyan 1990, 65–66; Diakonoff 1991, 13, n. 3, 30.
[79] *KUKN* 30, Urart. $Text_{5}$; *CTU* I, A 3-11 Ro_{5}.
[80] *KUKN* 30, Urart. $Text_{4-5}$; *CTU* I, A 3-11 Vo_{4-5}.
[81] *Chicago Assyrian Dictionary* 12 (2005), 145–48.
[82] *KUKN* $30_{13–14}$; *CTU* I, A 5-$5_{13–14}$.
[83] *Cf.* the literature, given in Salvini 1979, 580, n. 21. See also Diakonoff 1989, 96.

(É)*adunusi*

The structure called an (É)*adunusi* is mentioned exclusively in the texts of the 7th century BC, especially, in the *susi* temple inscriptions of the cities founded by Rusa son of Argishti. This term is used in the context where weapons and other sacred objects are also mentioned.[84] Therefore, it may be supposed that an (É)*adunusi* was a structure where weapons and other votive items dedicated to the god Haldi used to be kept. Accordingly, this could have been any building connected with the temple, such as storage, deprived of any cultic meaning.[85]

É*sir(i)hani*

Just like (É)*adunusi*, structures called É*sir(i)hani* are also used exceptionally in the time of Rusa son of Argishti, in the inscriptions of *susi* temples founded by him.[86] But it is impossible so far to outline the exact function of this structure. In contrast to (É)*adunusi*, É*sir(i)hani* is mentioned in the texts describing rituals and sacrifices, but, unfortunately, in less understandable contexts. This structure was probably found in the vicinity of a *susi* temple and was somehow linked to the sacrifice of animals (*zadini* ŠUM É*sirhani* …… É*sirhanini susinika*).[87] The structure obviously had a cultic importance.[88] Taking into consideration the connection of the structure with sacrifice and also the fact that the texts seem to differentiate sacrifices to Haldi in front of the 'gates of Haldi' (d*haldie išani šini zadini* ŠUM d*haldina* KÁ-*kai*),[89] then it might be possible to see here a building whence the bronze statuettes of other Urartian gods, like that found during the excavation of Karmir-Blur, were taken out and placed for cultic ceremonies.[90] Whether a grand room with 'ornamented podium', excavated recently in Ayanis near the *susi* temple of the citadel,[91] could have any connection with this structure remains open for debate.[92]

[84] For example, *CTU* I, A 12-1 $IV_{2,\ 5}$.
[85] See Batmaz 2015, 145–46, 151.
[86] *CTU* II, 181–182.
[87] For example, *CTU* I, A 12-1 $II_{10–11}$.
[88] *Cf.* Diakonoff 1989, 96–97; 1991, 15, n. 26.
[89] For example, *CTU* I, A 12-1 $III_{1–2}$.
[90] A statuette of god Teisheba was found during excavation in Karmir-Blur; another statuette, found at Darabey, is thought to represent the goddess Warubaini. See Piotrovsky 1967, 52–53, fig. 33, pl. 15.
[91] Işıklı and Beşikçi 2017, 64–67.
[92] My gratitude to Mehmet Işıklı, head of the excavations at Ayanis, for sharing with me his ideas on this structure.

Other Structures

Names of some other structures such as ^{É}*barzu*/*idib(i)duni*,[93] *iriduni*$^{(?)}$,[94] ^{É}*ṭulurini*,[95] *qudulani*[96] and ^{É}*ašihusi* are also known from Urartian texts.[97] Here, however, there is a great uncertainty. The first two of these structures might have been buildings for military purpose. Though the context of the inscription mentioning ^{É}*ṭulurini* does not exclude the possibility of seeing here a kind of cultic structure, nothing more can be stated for now.[98] The term *qudulani* might stand for 'building' in general.[99] With reference to ^{É}*ašihusi*, it was generally considered as 'house for sacrifices, altars' linking it with the verb *ašh(u)*- which forms the words 'to sacrifice' (*ašhashtu*-) and 'sacrifice' (*ašhašti*) in the Urartian language.[100] However, a new etymology, recently suggested, hints that it could have been a palace-like structure – a 'hall for ceremonies'.[101]

The State Ideology and the Concept of 'Temple' in Urartu

However strange it may seem, beginning from the 'imperial' period of the Urartian state there is no evidence for the existence of temples or certain architectural structures devoted to other deities of the state pantheon. The ruling ideology of the state, concentrated around the worship of Haldi – the tutelary deity of the royal house of Biainili – could serve as the explanation for this phenomenon.[102]

The Urartian state was notable for the absolutism of the cult of the god Haldi: a cult, which Grigor Ghapantsyan defined as 'Haldomania'.[103] One can assume that his worship even aimed at monotheism.[104]

The evidence for the absolutism in the worship of Haldi is the fact that all the cultic ceremonies in Urartu were carried out in *susi* temple of Haldi, in

[93] *KUKN* 46, 114–116, 278a, 481; *CTU* I, A 5-60-64, A 9-19.
[94] *CTU* I, A 5-78$_{2–3}$.
[95] *KUKN* 98$_{1–2}$; *CTU* I, A 5-34$_{1–2}$.
[96] *KUKN* 36 I$_4$, II$_4$, 38b$_{11}$, 392$_5$, 424$_7$; *CTU* I, A 3-2$_{4, 9}$, A 3-12$_{11}$, 10-6$_{4'}$, A 12-1 I$_9$, A 12-2 I$_7$.
[97] *KUKN* 108$_{1-3}$-109$_{1-3}$, 111$_{1, 2}$, 192$_4$, 265$_5$, 427a$_2$, 526$_1$; *CTU* I, A 5-65A$_{1–3}$, A 5-65B$_{1–3}$, A 5-65C$_{1–3}$, A 8-30$_4$, A 9-20$_5$, A 12-10$_2$, *CTU* IV B 18-3$_1$, B 8-28$_1$.
[98] See also Belli and Salvini 2004, 164.
[99] *KUKN*, Glossary, p. 459.
[100] *KUKN*, Glossary, pp. 437–38.
[101] Wilhelm and Akdoğan 2011.
[102] Ghapantsyan 1940, 112–17; Diakonoff 1983; Salvini 1987, 405; 1989, 86; Taffet and Yakar 1998, 133–34, 144–45; Grekyan 2005, 39–40.
[103] Ghapantsyan 1940, 114.
[104] S. Hmayakyan 1990, 34; Grekyan 2006, 157; 2015, 391.

front of the 'gates of Haldi' or 'steles of Haldi'. There is the impression that the concept of 'temple' in Urartu in general could have been perceived as the 'temple of Haldi'.[105] Even in Karmir-Blur, which carried the name of Teisheba (^{d}*teišebaini*/^{d}IM-*ni* URU),[106] the storm god, there is no known building that could be considered as temple of Teisheba, moreover there is no specific evidence for the worship of that god in Karmir-Blur except for the record about the sacrifice for him in line with other gods. Instead, there was a *susi* temple of Haldi and the 'gates of Haldi' in that city;[107] Haldi had a 'house' there (^{d}*haldinie* É),[108] ceremonies were carried out in front of Haldi and Warubaini (^{d}*haldika* ^{d}*'arubainika*),[109] in front of the 'gates of Haldi' (^{d}*haldinani* KÁ-*kai*) and the '*susi* temple' of Haldi (*susinika*).[110]

We deal with the same situation also in cases when newly-founded cities used to have as a component in their names that of the mountain/deity 'in front of' which they were built. This refers particularly to the cities named ^{m}*rusahinili* ^{KUR}*qilbanikai* (Toprakkale), ^{m}*rusahinili* ^{KUR}*eidurukai* (Ayanis) and, probably, to ^{m}*argištehinili* ^{KUR}*artarabšakai*. Qilbani was known as a mountain-god, probably Mt Varaga (Er(e)k Dağı),[111] which was mentioned in the Meher Kapısı inscription,[112] but we do not have any evidence of a temple/sanctuary of that god or devoted to his worship from Rusahinili Qilbanikai. It also refers to the god Eiduru, namely Mt Süphan.[113] 'In front of' that mount another city, Rusahinili Eidurukai, was built. Though in the extensive text of the *susi* temple inscription of that city god Eiduru is mentioned as the one for whom, in line with other gods, a sacrifice of a sheep was determined,[114] there is no evidence for any special structure or stele which could be linked to the worship of that god. As in case of the large inscription of Karmir-Blur, the text here also mentions the sacrifices and rituals taken place in front of *susi* temple of Haldi or in front of the god Haldi and the goddess Warubaini.[115] The same can also be stated about Argishtihinili Artarabshakai. Artarabsha, which is identified with Akça-dağ or one of the mountains of Aladağlar

[105] Petrosyan 2006, 261.
[106] *KUKN* 422, 424_{2}; *CTU* I, A 12-2 I_{2}, *CTU* IV, B 12-15, CB Ay-4_{1}.
[107] For example, *KUKN* $424_{1–2}$; *CTU* I, A 12-2 $I_{1–2}$.
[108] *KUKN* $424_{14, 20–21}$; *CTU* I, A 12-2 $I_{3, 9–10}$.
[109] *KUKN* 424_{15}; *CTU* I, A 12-2 I_{4}.
[110] *KUKN* $424_{16–18}$; *CTU* I, A 12-2 $II_{5–7}$.
[111] Salvini 2002, 130, 133.
[112] *KUKN* 38 Text I_{18}, Text II_{31}. *CTU* I, A $3\text{-}1_{18, 62}$.
[113] Çilingiroğlu and Salvini 1995, 120.
[114] *CTU* I, A 12-1 II_{1}.
[115] *CTU* I, A 12-1 $II_{9–11}$.

range,[116] and was most probably worshiped as a deity. Nevertheless, his name like that of Eiduru is not even mentioned in the Meher Kapısı inscription and there has been no evidence of a probable cult so far.

When we come to the group of people called ^{LÚ}*palagi*[117] and ^{LÚ}*aweitini*,[118] probably the representatives of priests/serving staff of temples, mentioned in some Urartian cultic texts, here one can also face great uncertainty.[119] As for now, it is not clear whether each god had an individual priest serving him, as one encounters in case of the Hittites.[120] The mention of the people of the goddess Warubaini (LÚ ^{d}*'aruba*)[121] in one of the texts of Ayanis hints at such a possibility, though it should be noted that Warubaini could simply be the female representative of the god Haldi, the carrier of his female features.[122] In any case, even if one accepts the possibility of the existence of priests serving different gods, which is very probable, we must still conclude that their worship and rituals could have been carried out nowhere but in the temple of Haldi or in front of a cultic structure connected with the worship of Haldi.

Given the fact that the concept of 'temple' in Urartu meant 'temple of Haldi', especially when it refers to *susi* temples, then in the context of the absence of temples of such great gods as Teisheba, Shivini or Quera, it is extremely strange that the Urartian kings Argishti son of Minua and Sarduri son of Argishti could have built two *susi* temples for two 'secondary' gods, which is what Iubsha and Irmushini are.[123] By the way, the former is not mentioned in the list of gods of the Meher Kapısı inscription. It is considered a deity of foreign (Luwian?) origin and the insertion of worship of it into Urartu is generally connected with the warriors resettled in Erebuni by Argishti son of Minua from the 'Hittite' lands of Hate and Supa.[124] In the case of Irmushini, which does figure in the list of gods of the Meher Kapısı inscription,[125] though not in the group of first rank gods, that Sarduri son of Argishti devoted a *susi* temple to this deity in Çavuştepe is inexplicable. The dedication of temples

[116] *CTU* IV, p. 183.

[117] *KUKN* 424_{14}; *CTU* I, A 12-1 II_9, 12-2 II_3.

[118] *KUKN* 425_{x+2}; *CTU* I, A 12-1 III_{11}, 12-2 III_2.

[119] For a possible interpretation, see, for example, Diakonoff 1991, 14, n. 19. *Cf.* also the man/men called ^{LÚ}*sheluini*, ^{LÚ}*urbikani* and ^{LÚ}*purunurdani*, who figure in a cultic text found from the 'City of Argishtihinili of the Land of Waza' (see *KUKN* 193; *CTU* I, A8-14).

[120] In the temples at Hattusas there were even statuettes of the gods of some neighbouring lands, which have their serving priest (see Kosyan 2002, 229, n. 38, with references to sources).

[121] *CTU* IV, CB Ay-39.

[122] Melikishvili 1954, 372.

[123] *KUKN* 195–196, 247; *CTU* I, A 8-21A-B, A 9-17. The reconstruction of the context in one of two damaged building inscriptions found from Patnos, according to which a *susi* temple had been built to the god Ua, is not trustworthy (see *CTU* I, A $3\text{-}12_4$; *cf. KUKN* $38b_{14}$, n. 3, 5).

[124] Melikishvili 1958. *Cf.* Salvini 1995, 45, 186; *KUKN*, Glossary, pp. 484–85.

[125] *KUKN* 38 Text I_9, Text II_{13}. *CTU* I, A $3\text{-}1_{9,\ 44}$.

by the two most powerful Urartian kings to gods other than Haldi is barely possible to observe as a deviation from the general 'Haldi-centred' ideology and must have another explanation. For instance, they might have been tutelary deities of those kings, the worship of which might have been encouraged and syncretised with Haldi.[126] These gods could represent an aspect of Haldi and, all in all, Haldi himself.

Some Thoughts on the 'Temple of *susi*'

Urartian texts thus point to some terms that could be understood as 'temples'. These include the 'steles of Haldi', the 'house of Haldi', the 'gate of Haldi', and '*susi* temple of Haldi'. The latter is the main if not the only architectural structure which could be identified definitely as a 'temple'.

In contrast to the illusory diversity, in reality we are dealing with different means to express the same concept connected with Haldi and receive the impression that all these terms refer to the same structure.

The nub is that some Urartian texts provide information about the construction of 'gates' in parallel with information on building the temple of *susi*. Obviously they were interconnected, and though there is an opinion that the 'gates' could have been free-standing structures separate from temples,[127] it is now almost certain that the 'gate' is the same as the entrance of the temple of *susi* and that these two refer to the same structure.[128] The separate usage in the text may have been because the cliff/mountain serving as a 'house' for Haldi, and on which the gates were structured, initially lacked any architectural characteristic of an imaginary 'house'. It is not by chance that Urartian texts mention 'gates' much earlier than *susi* temples. Accordingly, the *susi* temples of later origin simply symbolised the same cliff/mountain on which the gate was structured or, in other words, Urartian *susi* temples were architectural duplicates of/substitutes for a cliff/mountain.[129]

[126] In this respect it is worth mentioning references in the texts to the tutelary gods and goddesses of some Urartian kings, such as ^{m}*argištinie* DINGIR, ^{m}*rusainie* ^{d}GI/DINGIR-*gi*, ^{m}*rusainie* ^{d}NIN, etc. (*CTU* I, A 11-1 Vo$_{6–7}$, $_{32–33}$, A14-1 Vo$_{9–10}$, $_{19–20}$). *Cf.* also Tarhan 2005, 124–25.

[127] See, for example, Diakonoff 1989, 95–96.

[128] Tarhan and Sevin 1975, 395–98, 407–10; Sevin and Belli 1977, 375; Salvini 1979, 580–83; Tanyeri-Erdemir 2007, 210–11. See also van Loon 1966, 54. *Cf.* Diakonoff 1989, 95–97; Çilingiroğlu 2005, 31, n. 1.

[129] There are no remains of any temple near the 'gate' at Pagan/Yeşilalıç, in spite of the fact that in the inscription carved on it the construction of a 'gate' and a *susi* temple is mentioned. One can think that the cliff, on which the gate was structured, symbolised a *susi* temple. See also Sevin and Belli 1977, 372; Badalyan 2013, 89. *Cf.* Genç 2015; Dan 2017.

On the other hand, one of the inscriptions of Minua found in the village of Kevenli is of great importance for the description of the *susi* temple as an architectural structure.[130] In the Assyrian part of the bilingual text, in the context where the use of the word '*susi*' was presupposed, the term *isītu* is used. In Assyrian it means a 'tower'. Here comes the second definition of *susi* as a 'tower-temple'.[131]

It is obvious that there is a link between the worship of the 'Sacred Tree' and Haldi, the steles of Haldi, or the *susi* temple.[132] The recent evidence for this is the remains of the 'Sacred Tree' found in Ayanis (Figs. 13–14),[133] the illustrations of which are known from Urartian iconography. Here we encounter depictions of cultic scenes where 'Sacred Trees' are represented in one range with steles, side by side (Figs. 8–9).[134] On the other hand, the existence of trees 'planted' in front of the *susi* temple was fixed archaeologically,[135]

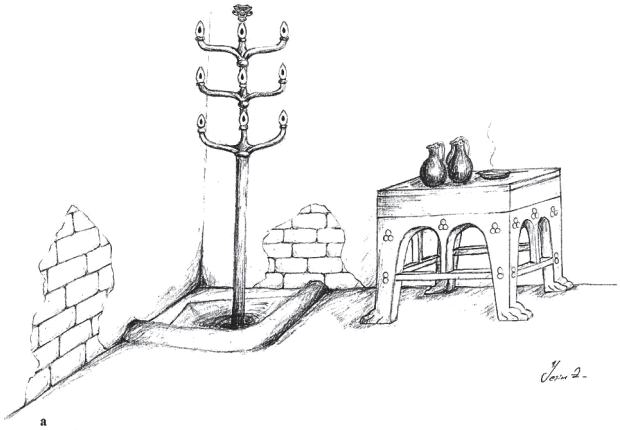

Fig. 13. Attempt of reconstruction of the remains of 'Sacred Tree' discovered at the north-western corner of the so-called 'Ceremonial Corridor', near the temple area of Ayanis (after Batmaz 2013a, fig. 28a).

[130] *KUKN* 141; *CTU* I, A 5-44.

[131] Salvini 1979, 581–82.

[132] On the worship of 'Sacred Tree' in Urartu, see Belli 1980; van Loon 1966, 74–75; Mnatsakanyan 1977; Calmeyer 1979, 186–88; Diakonoff 1983, 193–94; Çevik 1999; Tumanyan 2005, 19–23; Baştürk 2009, 134–36.

[133] Batmaz 2013.

[134] Lehmann-Haupt 1907, 82, fig. 54; C. Işık 1986, Abb. 2a. See also Çevik 1999, 344–47, lev. 6e, etc.

[135] Çilingiroğlu 2005, 31. See also Özgüç 1966, 40, pls. IX.2, X.1. In another case it can be a stone stele(?): see Burney 1966, 71–72; *cf.* Tanyeri-Erdemir 2007, 212–13, n. 11; see also Tumanyan 2005, 22–23.

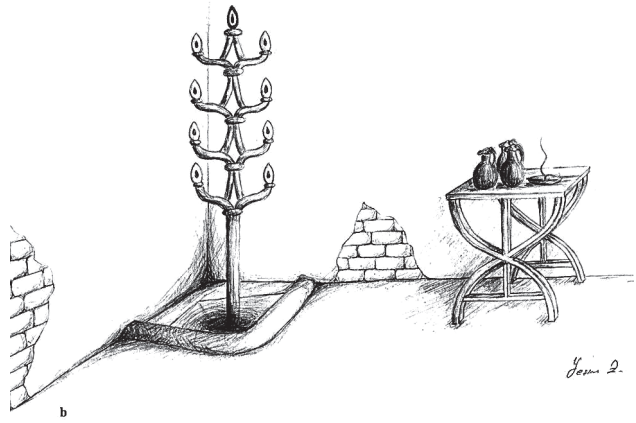

Fig. 14. Another attempt of reconstruction of the remains of 'Sacred Tree' (after Batmaz 2013a, fig. 28b).

something which is also visible in the Urartian iconography: in effect, the 'Sacred Tree' in this case symbolised a *susi* temple (Fig. 15). Therefore, as it can be seen, one deals with different expressions of the same concept: in one case as a stele, in the other as a 'sacred tree', while in the third case as a *susi* temple.

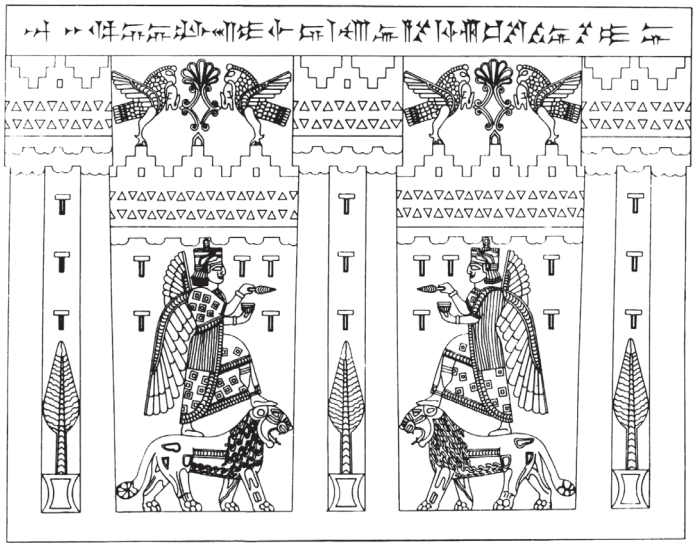

Fig. 15. Drawing of an engraved stone block found at Adilcevaz Kef Kalesi (after Bilgiç and Öğün 1964, fig. 2).

In the Urartian period Haldi continued to act as the god of fertility.[136] In this regard it is important to mention that many quivers, as well as some pots and vessels full of grain corns presented to Haldi, were discovered in Ayanis.[137] One should not forget that Haldi himself was an archer-god,[138] the weapon of Haldi called a $^{(GIŠ)}$*šuri* could be a bow,[139] the arrows of which could be identified with the spike as a symbol of the fertility function of the god. Thus, nothing interferes with the thought that Haldi himself could have been a deity of grain.

In the illustrations of Urartian bronze items one frequently encounters tower-like structures, which are supposed to depict *susi* temples.[140] They normally end with a specific 'symbol' which could be a symbolic depiction of a spike.[141] This composition of the spike and the *susi* temple of Haldi, giving it birth, was identified with the cliff/mountain and the vegetation around it, which was given birth by the cliff, i.e. Haldi, the mountain-god.

Afterword

As we can see, Urartian temples and sanctuaries were formed in parallel with the growth of the state, under the direct impact of Haldi-centred ideology. The prototype of Urartian temples, as well as the worship centres of the gods which we call 'native Urartian', can be seen in the southern regions of the highlands.[142] At the same time the Lake Van basin is considered to be the cradle of the Urartian state, with the city of Van as its centre.

It is known that there was a structure in Van Citadel named in the literature as 'the temple of the worship of ancestors', construction of which is usually attributed to Sarduri (I), son of Lutipri.[143] The question arises of whether that temple, as a structure of already formed architecture, had its impact on the tradition of Urartian temple-building. If we consider Sarduri as the builder of that 'temple', the answer is a negative.[144] The problem is that the city of

[136] Loseva 1962, 304–06; H. Hmayakyan 2005, 168–69; Çilingiroğlu 2007.
[137] Çilingiroğlu 2004, 258; 2005, 33, 35; etc.
[138] Belli 1999, 37–41, fig. 18, pl. 51.
[139] See also Radner 2012, 253; Roaf 2012, 364, n. 30. *Cf.* Çilingiroğlu and Salvini 1999.
[140] Calmeyer 1979, 188–92; Movsisyan 1998, 36–37, pls. XXIII–XXV; Mnatsakanyan 1977, 202; Tumanyan 2005, 25.
[141] *Cf.* Sevin and Belli 1977, 374–75; Belli 1980, 241–43; Calmeyer 1979, 188–92; Baştürk 2011, 166–67; Roaf 2012. For illustrations, see Movsisyan 1998, tables 23–26.
[142] See also Batmaz 2009.
[143] Tarhan 1994, 33, fig. 8; 2005, 122–23; 2011, 303–06, fig. 7; etc.
[144] *Cf.* Tarhan 1994, 33; 2005, 121–23.

Van, ancient Tushpa, was not initially under the control of Ishpuini;[145] it represented another cultural world, where Haldi was not even known, so it is not by chance that his name was never mentioned in the Assyrian inscriptions of Tushpa left by the above-mentioned Sarduri son of Lutipri.[146]

Moreover, Ishpuini was the first ruler who did not initially carry the traditional title of the Urartian kings: 'Lord of (the city of) Tushpa' (*alusi* ^{URU}*ṭušpae* URU/*patare*). Three inscriptions containing royal titles from the times of his sole reign are known, and it is obvious that Ishpuini did not call himself 'Lord of Tushpa' in any of them.[147] The same applies to the inscribed bronze rings found from the Urartian fortress of Upper Anzaf: they have Assyrian texts where Ishpuini was represented with rich titles, but the name of Tushpa was again absent.[148]

Finally, only two out of four dozen inscriptions known from the time of Ishpuini were found in Tushpa or nearby.[149] Only one cuneiform text is known exactly from Tushpa left by Ishpuini, his son Minua and Inushpua, the son of Minua. This text was written during the later period of the reign of Ishpuini. The text is also unique as it is the only example which mentions the construction of *susi* temple of Haldi and 'gates of Haldi' for the city of Tushpa (*kani* ^{URU}*ṭušpa patare*), as well as the presenting of domestic animals to him.[150] No other text with similar content is known.

All this hints at the establishment of Biainilian hegemony in the region of modern Van taking place in a period where the native traditions of cultic architecture, including the so-called 'temple of the worship of ancestors' mentioned above, had already been developed.

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[145] Grekyan 2013.
[146] *KUKN* 1-6; *CTU* I, A 1-1A-F, A 1-2.
[147] *KUKN*, Afterword, p. 531; *CTU* I, A 2-6A-C.
[148] Belli *et al*. 2009, 100–04.
[149] *KUKN* 20; *CTU* I, A 4-1; Işık and Genç 2012.
[150] *KUKN* 20; *CTU* I, A 4-1.

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URARTIAN FUNERARY ARCHITECTURE

Erkan KONYAR

Abstract

Urartian tomb architecture exhibits common characteristics that enable some classification. Rock-cut tombs and subterranean burial chambers are found over a wide region. Standard practices can be noted in the architecture and the burials. Urartian multi-chamber tombs carved into the bedrock follow a unique and independent path of development, which is a natural result of the Urartians' capacity for rock-cutting. The royal rock-cut tombs at Van Citadel contain the most important examples for understanding Urartian rock-cut tomb architecture. The 'Great Horhor Cave', its inscription allowing it to be dated to Argishti I, is a major reference for defining and dating these types of tombs. The most characteristic feature in the citadel is multi-chamber arrangements reached via stairs. The monumental scale and façades with platforms in front of them are more a hallmark of the capital, while smaller versions can be found in the rural areas, most likely built by rulers with allegiance to the centre. Subterranean burial chambers are the most common type of grave in the Urartian lands. In general there are two types: stone-built and rock-cut . The former usually consist of a single rectangular chamber built with stone walls beneath the ground, while the rock-cut tombs more frequently exhibit multi-chamber arrangements. In particular, some of the graves of Altıntepe, which functioned as the capital's necropolis, present miniature examples of multi-chamber arrangements and rock-cut tombs built underground. The Urartian burial traditions can be identified most often through the subterranean burial chambers. Graves uncovered by archaeological excavations have yielded many *in-situ* finds illustrating the Urartian approach to burying their dead. Multiple burials have been made in these burial chambers. Inhumation burials are found in the foetal position. Cremation burials can also be found in the same graves. A large quantity of jewellery and pottery was placed in the chambers as burial gifts; these objects are a primary source for dating these types of graves, but certain dating attempts based solely on some groups of finds have caused debate, when the entirety of the group of finds and their condition are considered.

INTRODUCTION

The kingdom of Urartu, which existed for around 250 years, created a homogeneous cultural structure ranging from architecture to small crafts in a region centred upon the Lake Van basin. With the cities they founded – citadels containing palaces, storage structures, tombs and temples and the associated lower settlements – the Urartians pioneered many novelties in their region.

Their skills in pottery-making and, particularly, in metalware decoration are noteworthy: they were the most skilful architects of their time in the Near East. A reflection of the new architectural style they carried with them as they expanded geographically can be observed in their tombs.

When the Urartians emerged as a state in the 9th century BC, they publicly adopted the cultural life of the societies that had previously lived in the same territory, both their cultural structure and the traditions they left behind, from architecture to small crafts. It is unknown to what extent local people's life-style, customs and religious beliefs were influenced by the new kingdom's ideology. Undoubtedly, those living in the rural areas far from the kingdom's centres maintained many of their traditions. When the realities of the geography central to the development of Urartu, i.e. eastern Anatolia, are considered, it does not seem plausible that radical changes would occur in approaches and production techniques in architecture, pottery, small crafts, religion, burial, etc. Indeed, rural life and the lifestyle and architecture that it entails have preserved many of their essential elements for millennia, even until the present-day.

Examining the subject from the perspective of burial architecture and traditions, we can safely assume that typologies such as subterranean burial chambers, simple earthen tombs and (in particular) stone sarcophagi continued to exist in the Urartian period as part of the traditional cultural structure. It is understood that *kurgan*-type tombs, dating back at least as far as the 2nd millennium BC and associated with the region's semi-nomadic/highland culture, had quite a wide field of application. These tombs, which usually feature stone sarcophagi with individuals buried, have a conical appearance due to the stones and earth piled on top of them. In the Caucasus, such tombs date back to the 4th millennium BC and are associated most with the Kura-Araxes cultures; early examples have as yet to be identified in Urartian territory.

The rock-cut tombs in the royal cities of Urartu emerge with a new form, presenting prestigious monuments of state authority. In fact, these types of monumental tombs are a version of the subterranean burial chambers called 'People's Tombs' executed on a monumental scale. The subterranean burial zones, consisting of the main burial chamber, side chambers or burial niches, reach monumental dimensions with the royal tombs. In these structures, arranged like a house for the deceased, there is a main hall and many burial rooms opening off it. From this point of view, it is clear that there is an interaction between the tradition of subterranean burial chambers defined as popular tombs and Urartian rock-cut tombs. However, it is hard to say which type predates the other, i.e. which one is the source of the interaction. In the meantime, many new arguments have been put forth in recent years related to the chronology of subterranean burial chambers of the Early Iron Age.

Much archaeological evidence has been presented suggesting that these types of tombs, which are discussed in more detail below, have an Urartian character.

Tomb architecture within Urartian territory actually presents common characteristics that make classification possible. The rock-cut tombs and subterranean burial chambers are understood to spread over an extensive territory. Standard approaches in architecture and burial customs are also noticeable. However, chronology is still uncertain. For instance, practically all of the stone wall tombs have been dated to the Early Iron Age, while practically all of the rock-cut tombs in the region have been associated with the Urartian period. Problems related to chronology are discussed below. The middens found around the stone wall tombs are especially illuminating in this context.

Urartian Tomb Types

Various classifications of Urartian tombs have been essayed: (1) by architectural characteristics such as dimensions, building material, building technique and plan; (2) according to concepts denoting the social status of the deceased, such as royal burial chambers, leaders' tombs, people's tombs, etc. Here, I offer a general grouping that takes into account those classifications, using headings including royal tombs/rock-cut tombs, subterranean burial chambers, stone sarcophagi, simple earthen tombs and urn tombs.[1] In some cases, examples are actually found that carry traits common to the above-mentioned classifications: for example, those where part of the subterranean stone wall tomb is inserted into hard soil or bedrock, or where an urn burial is placed in the rock-cut tomb or in the subterranean burial chamber.

1. Rock-Cut Tombs

Rock-carved, multi-chamber Urartian tombs are understood to have followed an independent and unique path of development. The rock-cut tomb tradition of Urartu can be said to have developed as a natural result of rock-hewing possibilities. Shaping the existing bedrock had an important place in the architectural solutions devised by the Urartians, particularly for defence and public spaces. Existing rocky areas in settled land were hewn to become the main elements of the architecture. The products of their talents in this field can be

[1] Van Hulsteyn 1981; Sevin 1987; 2012; Çevik 2000; Köroğlu 2007; 2008; Konyar 2011a.

Fig. 1. Van Citadel/Tushpa lies just east of Lake Van. Here, one can observe many elements characteristic of Urartian citadels.

seen in wall beds, steps, walls, open-air sacred spaces, monumental niches, fountains and inscriptions (Fig. 1).

The multi-chamber rock-cut tombs of the Urartu were likely used as a house for the dead: the arrangement of the main hall with side rooms opening onto it and the style of façade encountered in the Doğu Odaları (Eastern Rooms) and the Neft Kuyu tomb (Naphtha Well tomb) suggest that they reflect domestic

Fig. 2. The Doğu Odaları constitute a model for Urartian royal tombs. The monumental stairs, the platform created by flattening the bedrock, the monumental façade and the bench that lies along the façade, also created by flattening the bedrock.

and even palatial architecture (Fig. 2). These structures, which usually have an organic connection with the citadel and are built *intra-muros*, have rock platforms in front of them reached via stairs. The main halls entered from these platforms by ascending rock-hewn steps and passing through a single-leaf door, and the side chambers again entered from these halls through doors, reveal complex structures rather than simple burial spaces carved into the bedrock. It is difficult to say how the interior arrangements of these tombs might have been, as there were no *in-situ* finds; however, some architectural details permit limited interpretations to be made.

Urartian royal tombs were built in the citadel, in a position reached by stairs. Assyrian practice is suggested as providing the inspiration. In the fortified citadels of Assur (the capital) and Nimrud, burial chambers are found beneath buildings associated with the palace, connected to each other via corridors.[2] There are small niches in the walls of the burial chambers at Assur and the dead were placed in stone sarcophagi. Written documents found in these tombs

[2] Mallowan 1952; Haller 1954, 172; Damerji 1999; 2008; Lundström 2009; Genç 2015, 285.

have helped date them to the periods of Assur-bel-kala II (1073–1056 BC), Assurnasirpal (883–859 BC) and Şamsi-Adad V (823–811 BC). Chambers uncovered underground in the Nimrud Citadel in recent years, and thought to be burial chambers, are an important source of information thanks to their not having caved in.[3] The burial chambers here consist of an entrance section, again reached via stairs, and a main burial hall behind it. The chambers also feature small niches for burial gifts to be placed and the use of sarcophagi.

In Nimrud, the multi-chamber structure, which was found under chambers 74 and 75 thought to be part of the harem, has been suggested particularly as a prototype for Urartu multi-chamber tombs.[4] Three chambers are found to be lined up next to each other here, with rectangular plans of approximate dimensions 10 × 2, entered via barrel-vaulted corridors/entrance sections. The chambers, themselves barrel-vaulted, have niches on their walls.

It is also argued that the ceilings of the main halls at the Neft Kuyu and İç Kale tombs being carved in the shape of barrel vaults may have been Assyrian influence[5] (Fig. 3). Indeed, both Assur and Nimrud contain tombs built underground in their citadels, where the top covers are constructed with bricks as barrel vaults.

Of the Urartian rock-cut tombs, those of the Doğu Odaları, Neft Kuyu and İç Kale (Inner Fortress tomb) exhibit rock-cut cornices between the side walls and ceilings, consisting of semi-circular reliefs and mouldings, remarkable details that first and foremost provide clues about the tombs' architectural origins. The cornices, made carved into the rock where the side walls meet the top cover, consisting of one line in some cases and two in others, were probably meant to express the construction style of the top cover. It is well established that in Urartian architecture, top covers of structures are formed by wooden logs laid side by side. The cornices in question must have attempted to represent this construction style. This is observed in the İç Kale tomb and in the main hall of the Doğu Odaları. As for the Neft Kuyu tomb, the main hall and burial chamber 2 feature cornices with double-lined semi-circular rows, which present a different style (Fig. 4). The cornices in the Neft Kuyu tomb bear resemblance to those in the rock-cut tomb at Mazgirt-Kaleköy, in the entrance section of which an inscription belonging to Rusa II was found (Fig. 5). At this point, the possibility of a chronological connection between the tombs at Neft Kuyu and the period of Rusa son of Argishti is worth discussing.

[3] Damerji 1999; 2008.
[4] Genç 2015.
[5] Sevin 2012, 97–98.

Fig. 3. Neft Kuyu tomb. The main hall has been carved in the shape of a barrel vault. A cornice lies along the edges where the side walls meet the barrel vault.

Fig. 4. Neft Kuyu Tomb. Area known as the royal burial chamber, double-layered cornices with scallops (semi-circular notched mouldings), carved into the bedrock, are believed to represent the wooden beams used in the top cover of buildings.

Fig. 5. Tunceli/Mazgirt-Kaleköy tomb. A frame has been formed in the centre of the main hall reached immediately after the entrance, by carving into the bedrock. The far end of this area, similar to the Neft Kuyu tomb, has been arranged with a cornice with scallops (semi-circular notched mouldings). Again in the east, the edges of the door opening onto the second burial chamber has been animated with a frame shaped with semi-circular notched mouldings.

Another piece of evidence related to the interior arrangements of rock-cut tombs is in the tomb of Argishti I, where square hollows with concave sides and a hole in the middle are found (Fig. 6). These hollows measuring approximately 30 × 30 cm were first mentioned by F.E. Schulz.[6] To interpret them, certain mural paintings and artefacts from Assur and the Urartian period are important references. Some have argued that fixtures made of bronze or clay placed here may have served both functional and decorative purposes, to render the space more visually dynamic.[7] There are also suggestions that a suspension system may have existed to carry shields, swords and other heavy objects left as burial gifts,[8] and that the protrusions at the ends of the fixtures were carrying tools for illumination or perhaps the protrusions themselves

[6] Schulz 1840, 272.
[7] Genç 2015, 267.
[8] Forbes 1983, 102; Sevin 2012, 26; Ussishkin 1994.

Fig. 6.
a: In the tomb of Argishti I, the hollows where *siqqatu* were placed have been opened in a particular pattern all along the tomb's walls.
b: A concave plaque of baked clay, found in a temple of Ishtar Kidmuru in the Assyrian capital of Nimrud (after Oates and Oates 2001, pl. 12b).

served to illuminate the space.[9] This arrangement observed in the tomb of Argishti is significant in terms of demonstrating that the interiors of burial chambers could be quite lively. It is worth noting that the hollows' being placed in regular order at the same level suggests their likely visual function. A concave clay plaque, found in a temple in Nimrud and dated to Asurnasirpal II by the inscription on it, provides important information about the function of these hollows.[10] This decorated plaque, measuring 28 × 28 cm and of similar size to the hollows in the tomb of Argishti I, is understood to have decorative purposes. Some remains of mural paintings and the depictions on some artworks found again in the palaces of Assur and other Urartian cities, indicate that the hollows were most likely decorative elements, possibly used as part of a frieze.

The niches in the tomb of Argishti I, livening up the interior, present another noteworthy architectural detail, carved into all the walls in a standard manner (Figs. 7–8). Two niches straight across from the entrance set themselves apart from the others by having frames. Their location and structural characteristics point to a different function. It has been argued that urns or grave-goods would

[9] Layard 1853, 396.
[10] Oates and Oates 2001, pl. 12b; Genç 2015.

Fig. 7. The main hall at the tomb of Argishti I; square and rectangular hollows opened on the floor of the hall and rectangular niches on the side walls.

Fig. 8. In the main hall at the tomb of Argishti I, two framed niches are found in the centre of the wall in the north-east of the tomb, which have different characteristics from other niches.

be placed in these types of niches:[11] archaeological finds indicate that burial gifts were placed in niches found in the tombs uncovered in Assur and Nimrud,[12] and the same is proposed for the tomb of Argishti. The practice of carving niches is observed in rock-cut tombs and subterranean carved tombs in the rural parts of Urartiam territory. In the Tutak/Atabindi tomb, niches of quite a small size line the walls (Fig. 9). Niches of the same size can be noted in tomb 3 in Palu. Similarly, niches are found in the rock-cut tomb in Sangar in Iran. Furthermore, niches are widely found in the subterranean carved tombs of Altıntepe and Kalecik just north-east of Van Citadel[13] (Figs. 10–11). Looking at the dimensions of the niches, it is possible to say they had differing functions. For instance, Sevin argue that the niches in the north-western chamber of the Neft Kuyu tomb were used for burial.

Both the mouldings on the floors of the main hall and side rooms of Argishti's tomb and the burial beds within the tomb provide important references regarding the arrangement of the interiors. The hollow measuring 2.60 × 2.00 cm, created next to the northern wall of the main hall, is noteworthy (Fig. 7). Other distinguishing features of these tombs are the careful workmanship and framed character of their niches. To the west of the main hall is another area, carved loosely in a square shape and measuring 1.10 × 1.10 cm. Many scholars are of the view that the hollows in this area were made for the placement of sarcophagi and other related equipment. Similarly, the burial chamber lying to the east of the main hall in Argishti's tomb, containing four niches, has a hollow carved along its eastern wall, measuring approximately 1 m in width and 3.55 m in length, which is thought possibly to be a burial bed or a space to place a sarcophagus.

We should note at this point that such features could also have been added in later periods. When describing Urartian royal rock-cut tombs, many practices and details related to rock-cutting workmanship are almost entirely confined to Urartian chronology and discussed in terms of Urartian characteristics. However, we should not forget that such permanent structures were also used after the Urartian period by other states, civilisations and communities inhabiting the Van Citadel. For instance, it is confirmed by many sources that the tombs were used by the Ottomans right until the beginning of the 20th century for purposes of storage, workshops, etc. For this reason, we should take into account that major structural characteristics aside – characteristics reflecting the major character of Urartian architecture – some

[11] Sevin 2012, 24.
[12] Reade 2008, 101; Hussein 2008, 89; Hussein and Suleiman 2000; Genç 2015.
[13] Sevin 2012; Çavuşoğlu and Biber 2005; 2008; Çavuşoğlu *et al*. 2009.

Fig. 9. The Tutak/Atabindi tomb, Ağrı; this is another example for tombs located outside of the central region. In the main hall, many niches are found that have been opened on the same surface.

Fig. 10. In the Kalecik necropolis, located just north of the capital Tushpa, many subterranean rock-cut graves have been uncovered. In some graves entered via a well-shaped *dromos*, benches and niches are found lying along the wall.

Fig. 11. At Altıntepe, thought to be the necropolis of the capital Tushpa, many subterranean rock-cut graves have been uncovered. Again, the burial chambers are entered via a well-shaped *dromos*. With their multi-chamber arrangements and their niches alongside walls, they resemble miniatures of the Urartian royal tombs.

platforms, doors, doorway mechanisms and even some openings lacking regular plans in the burial chambers, could well be additions made in later times related to the later uses of the chambers. In particular, we must bear in mind that doorway mechanisms could have been altered substantially over this long period of use. It is imperative to be mindful of this in interpreting interventions in the lock systems.

Observing the arrangement of burial chambers with the above-mentioned concerns, one can see that the north-eastern room (Z04) of the Neft Kuyu tomb, the far north-western room (Z05) of the İç Kale tomb and the northern room (Z03) of the Doğu Odaları are examples where stairs directly cut into the bedrock and the niches for the dead belong to the original construction time of the tomb. In the Doğu Odaları, one reaches the burial bed and the platform via stairs (Fig. 12).

Arguments related to the interior arrangements of tomb-chambers are usually made based on structural features etched into the bedrock. In addition to these features, it is especially likely that earth, wood and other building materials were used in the interiors.

Fig. 12. Doğu Odaları tomb, chamber Z03, burial area/platform carved into the bedrock and reached via several steps.

The chronology of the tomb-chambers is quite controversial.[14] Aside from the Great Horhor Cave, which has the annals of Argishti I written on it and can thus be dated to him (Fig. 13), there is no tomb on which dating and other appraisals can be made based on a critique of style or sophisticated architectural workmanship. Datings based on style and architectural development and location of the tombs provoke other debates. For example, in the Doğu Odaları, usually dated to Sarduri II on account of its location, why is there no inscription belonging to Sarduri II, son of Argishti I, who particularly embraced the same writing tradition as his father? Similarly, why are inscriptions absent from the alleged tomb of Rusa son of Argishti II, whose time was perhaps the most intensive in terms of the use of writing, and who had long inscriptions written in the royal cities where important milestones were achieved in many fields, Urartian architecture included? If we are to date the İç Kale tomb,

[14] One of the first suggestions regarding the dating of the rock-cut tombs was made by F.W. König. He dated the İç Kale tomb to Sarduri I, the Neft Kuyu tomb to Minua, the Doğu Odaları to Sarduri II and the Great Horhor Cave to Argishti I (König 1955–57, 261–62). One of the latest suggestions on the subject is from V. Sevin (Sevin 2012, 102). Sevin dates the Neft Kuyu tomb to Sarduri I, the İç Kale tomb to Ishpuini, the Doğu Odaları to Minua and the Great Horhor Cave to Argishti I.

Fig. 13. Tomb of Argishti I, Van Citadel. The tomb is datable thanks to the annals belonging to Argishti I inscribed on its façade.

alleged to belong to founding kings Sarduri I, Ishpuini or Minua, by its location within the moat and below the upper citadel, should we not question the dating criteria of the Sardursburg structure, which is dated to Sarduri I due to its inscription but which lies beyond the moat, even outside the city walls and at the base of the plain? It is accepted as an important criterion for dating buildings in the citadel that the early buildings at Van Citadel must have been situated between the moats, and that as the citadel expanded, the buildings spread outside the moats. In the matter of dating tomb-chambers, it is possible to increase examples of such contradictions. Unfortunately, the archaeological and philological data gathered so far make it more difficult to establish which tomb might belong to which king. Even the chronology of the Great Horhor Cave, on which only the political activities of Argishti I are recorded, can be evaluated in this light. The *sirshini* of Minua, carved into the bedrock in the shape of a large hall and dated to the Minuan period due to its inscription at the entrance of Van Citadel, has parallels with tombs in terms of construction technique and approach. This argument should not be overlooked when discussing the chronology of tomb-chambers. At least, based on this structure, we can deduce that Minua was the first king who had architectural interventions made into the bedrock of Tushpa.[15]

Also, considering that there were 11 Urartian kings and they were all buried in Tushpa Citadel, it becomes clear that more than one king might be buried in the existing tombs and burial chambers.

Considering the general structural characteristics and some decorative elements, the tomb complexes of İç Kale, Neft Kuyu and the Doğu Odaları can be placed in the same category. All three examples feature an arranged façade (Fig. 14). In particular, the treatment of the façade of the Neft Kuyu tomb – divided into panels – may serve to represent the façade of an Urartian building (Fig. 15). At the point, the depictions of buildings on the buttresses of Kef Kalesi dated to the period of Rusa son of Argishti II can be taken as a reference. As mentioned earlier, there are significant similarities observed between the beam in the east room of Neft Kuyu and the beam depictions found in the inscriptions that belong to the period of Rusa son of Argishti II in the Mazgirt-Kaleköy tomb. Another commonality observed is the presence of platforms reached via steps, where the dead might have been placed, and the particular absence of niches – except for the large niches in the north-west room of Neft Kuyu. A platform reached via descending stairs and a main hall also accessible via stairs may be considered as a similarity as well. A further commonality is the mouldings in the main halls of the tomb-chambers. There

[15] Genç 2015.

Fig. 14. Van Citadel, Urartian royal tombs carved into bedrock at the steep slope of the south façade.

Fig. 15. The façade of the Neft Kuyu tomb. With the carving in the bedrock, the appearance of an Urartian building façade is what was most likely intended to be achieved. This also resembles the building depictions on the stone blocks retrieved from the palace at Adilcevaz Kef Kalesi.

are cornices forming straight protrusions in the main halls. This detail applied in the main halls is encountered in another instance, of the two semi-circular mouldings in the north-east room of Neft Kuyu. The main halls of the Neft Kuyu and İç Kale tombs have been carved in the shape of barrel vaults, while that of the Doğu Odaları has been carved flat.

Based on their structural attributes, location and function, the royal tombs at Van Citadel can be grouped under three headings:

– İç Kale, Neft Kuyu and the Doğu Odaları reflect a common style with all their attributes and considered in this light, they indicate a chronologically close set of dates;
– The tomb of Argishti is substantially distinct from the first group, both through its location and many structural attributes.
– The rock-cut tomb known as the Columbarium is unique from many aspects (Fig. 16).

Beside those at Van Citadel, examples from Kayalıdere,[16] Palu[17] (Fig. 17), Mazgirt-Kaleköy[18] (Fig. 5), Tatvan,[19] Doğubeyazıt,[20] Atabindi[21] (Fig. 9) and Pasinler Citadel are other rock-cut tombs located outside the central Urartian region that can be dated to the Urartian period through their architectural characteristics, locations and interior arrangements.

In north-west Iran, examples have been encountered that conform to the criteria of multi-chambered Urartu rock-cut tombs at centres such as Sangar[22] (Fig. 18), Verahram[23] and Kale Hodar.[24]

Multi-chamber rock-cut tombs located outside the capital of Tushpa are likely to have belonged to local rulers or princes who emulated the Urartians.[25] However, as mentioned earlier, the absence of artefacts in these tombs confines analysis to mere assumption. Sadly, there is no reference at hand regarding the chronologies of the burial chambers, except for the style-critique.

In recent years, many survey projects in the Lake Van basin have revealed burial chambers that are built in places difficult of access and reached through a narrow doorway, usually single-chambered and containing a burial bed; when

[16] Burney 1966.
[17] Charlesworth 1980; Sevin 1994.
[18] Sevin 1987; Çevik 2000.
[19] Özfırat 2002; Kılıç 2008.
[20] Huff 1968; 1990.
[21] Başgelen 1987.
[22] Kleiss 1968.
[23] Kleiss 1974, 88, Abb. 7.
[24] Kleiss 1974, 95–98, Abb. 18, 19.
[25] Köroğlu 2005; 2007.

Fig. 16. The Columbarium at Van Citadel distinguishes itself with its location from other rock-cut tombs. It was probably reached from the lower settlement.

Fig. 17. Palu tombs; these are rock-cut tombs built outside of the central Urartu region, most likely by provincial rulers or local lords. With their multi-chamber arrangements located within the Citadel, they are more modest versions of the Van Citadel royal rock-cut tombs.

Fig. 18. The Sangar rock-cut tomb in north-west Iran has parallels with the Doğu Odaları tomb at Van Citadel, particularly with its tomb façade and steps carved into the bedrock descending into the burial chamber.

evaluated according to their plans and locations, they are found not to conform to the Urartian rock-cut tomb characteristics outlined above. In Van Citadel, the Small Horhor tomb, the Arsenal tomb and the small tomb under the 'Great Platform', are important examples reflecting this distinction. They represent – with their plans and dimensions – a tradition different from the examples of royal tombs in Van Citadel. These tombs, which are small in size, single-chambered, and contain large niches connected to the chamber, may belong to post-Urartian times such as the Achaemenid, Hellenistic or Roman periods.[26]

The Royal Rock-Cut Tombs in Van Citadel

The rock-cut tombs in Van Citadel present us with important resources for identifying the characteristics and chronologies of Urartian tombs.[27] For this reason, they are addressed separately, so as to enable more considered relational definitions in light of the evaluations made above.

[26] Köroğlu 2007; Sevin 2012.
[27] Köroğlu 2007; 2008; Tarhan 2011; Konyar 2011a; Sevin 2012.

There are eight rock-cut tombs in the Tushpa-Van outcrop, almost all of them carved on the south façade. Of these, the Neft Kuyu tomb, the İç Kale tomb, the Doğu Odaları and the tomb of Argishti I have parallels with each other in terms of size and planning. The 'Columbarium' is usually grouped together with them.

The general consensus is that the kings of Urartu were buried in Van Citadel. Even if the king's actual residence or place of death had been in another location, the burial chamber was probably cut into the Van outcrop or he was buried in one of the existing burial chambers.[28] The main basis for this proposition is that no rock-cut tomb has been encountered in Karmir-Blur, Arin-Berd, Çavuştepe, Ayanis, Anzaf, Toprakkale or in any other major royal centre of Urartu to disprove it.

When the dimensions of these burial chambers located within the city walls are considered, it becomes apparent that not only the king himself, but dozens of other members of the royal family must have been buried there. The platforms and entry systems in front of these tombs built in sheltered places accommodate multiple functions. These spaces must also have been used for funerals or commemorative ceremonies taking place at certain times of the year. In particular, the area called 'the Great Platform', onto which the burial chambers south of the Neft Kuyu tomb and east of the İç Kale tomb open, is quite suitable for the above-mentioned functions.

The Tomb of Argishti I

The Tomb of Argishti I (785–756 BC) is the only burial chamber in Van Citadel that can be dated accurately owing to the annals on its façades (Fig. 13). The chamber, on the façade of which the chronicles of Argishti I are found, consists of a main hall and five other rooms connected to it. The tomb was laid on a south-east to north-west axis (Figs. 7, 19).

The chamber is reached by steps carved into the bedrock. At their foot is a small room whose function and chronology could not fully be determined. The stairs at the beginning are approximately 1.25 m in width and reach approximately 8.75 m at the end when they are adjacent to the façade of the burial chamber, forming a corridor and widening toward a platform that should be in front of the burial chamber. The burial beds that have been carved onto to bedrock just to the south of the entrance suggest the presence of a platform in front of the burial chamber. When the tomb façade and the location of the burial beds are taken into account, it is likely that there was a platform

[28] Köroğlu 2007; 2008.

Fig. 19. The tomb of Argishti I, plan and sections.

measuring approximately 3.5 × 5.75 m in front of the tomb. The annals of Argishti I, written on the rock in the form of columns along the stairs, on the south-facing façade of the tomb, are also known as the 'Horhor Inscriptions'. These inscriptions, which are the longest text known from the Urartian period, also continue on both sides of the doorway (Fig. 13).

Reached through a passage approximately 2.00 m in height, 1.75 m in depth and in some sections 1.15 m in width, the main hall has a flat ceiling and measures approximately 6.15 × 10.38 m (Fig. 7). Of the four rooms connected to the main hall each through a doorway and measuring 11 m^2, two are in the north, one in the east and one in the west (Fig. 19). Through a doorway in the room in the west, a further room is reached whose floor level is approximately 4 m deep. This room, measuring 5.10 × 4.10 m and with niches on the side walls like the other rooms, is noteworthy for its structural attributes. However, the niches here are deeper, and contrary to what previous publications state, there are ten of them (Fig. 19: Z03): one niche on the left of the entrance went un-noticed as no one could descend to the burial chamber. If the existing floor of this chamber is at this depth, it would not have been possible to have access to the niches from floor level as in the other chambers. Perhaps a wooden platform reached by a ladder solved this problem. Then again, the burial chamber could have been deepened with interventions made in a later period. A different interpretation is proposed below.

In the tomb of Argishti, there are 35 niches carved symmetrically in the main hall and side chambers. Most probably, burial gifts and cremation vessels (urns) were placed in these niches. Between the niches, there are square hollows with concave sides and a hole in the middle (*siqqatu*).[29] Based on some reliefs and mural paintings, we can assume these to be where decorated bronze plaques or lighting fixtures were set, or burial gifts and objects of cult significance were hung.

The hollow adjacent to the long north wall of the main hall, extending southwards and measuring 2.60 × 2.00 m, is noteworthy. In the same area, the fine workmanship of the niches carved in the north wall and the dynamic effect created by the frames around them make the niches special. To the west of this area, there is another area carved loosely in a square shape and measuring 1.10 × 1.10 m.

In the burial chamber lying to the east of the main hall, containing four niches, a hollow has been carved along its long eastern wall, measuring approximately 1 m in width and 3.55 m in length, and formed by carving the eastern

[29] Genç 2015, 267; Sevin 2012, 26, res. 34–35.

wall 2–5 cm in some places; this is thought to possibly be a burial bed or a space to place a sarcophagus.

The work carried out by the author's team during 2012 in the tomb of Argishti in Van Citadel, demonstrated that new approaches were needed in terms of understanding the period of use, chronologies, building techniques and planning systems of the tombs.[30] First of all, the Argishti main hall provides important information in this respect. In the north-west corner of the long wall across from the entrance of the hall, the deformation of the bedrock has needed to be fixed; thus the rock was carved into steps, beds were prepared for new stones and stone blocks cut straight were most probably placed here to complete this section. We can trace a kind of continuation of this intervention in the room lying to the north-west of the main hall. The same procedure undertaken done here, most likely to reinforce the ceiling. What needs to be questioned here is, at what stage this intervention was made. The general opinion is that while the burial chamber was being built, this deformed section of the bedrock was cut and stone cladding was applied over it. However, the mouldings on which concave square plaques sit, understood to occur in the last phase of tomb workmanship and used decoratively, were cut in these areas. The bedrock also provides us with a stratigraphy, i.e. a chronology. At this point, it is understood that a later intervention was made in the burial chamber. After the tomb was completely built, a crack in the rock that occurred for some reason was repaired with the stone block application. Unfortunately, it is difficult to determine the chronological process of this new intervention. Another intervention is observed in the area known as the hollow room in the tomb of Argishti. The doorway providing entry to this area is lower and in contrast to other interventions in the burial chamber, there is a lighting fixture above it. The planning system and niches of the chamber in the front being considered, it is immediately assumed that the hollow room originally had a niche as well. In my view, this unit was added later to the tomb of Argishti, which was originally designed to have four chambers. The existing niche was opened to create a door. The doorway here is narrower than other doorways and has the same width as the niches (75 cm). This newly added unit is not aligned with the main axis of the tomb and exhibits a different approach in terms of the plan and workmanship.

[30] Konyar and Avcı 2014, 213–14.

The Tombs around the Great Platform

The area known as 'the Great Platform'[31] in Van Citadel is a rectangular area lying in a north-west to south-easterly direction and measuring approximately 38.00 × 17.00 m. The location of the Great Platform, east of the Inner Fortress housing the earliest buildings of Van Citadel and about 34 m below the Inner Fortress walls, has been used as an important reference in establishing chronologies. To the north-east of the area is the Neft Kuyu tomb, and to its north-west the İç Kale (Fig. 20). There is a small burial chamber under the rocky platform to its south-west. To the west of the platform, in the area approximately 28.50 m above the platform, is the Arsenal tomb. Of the group of tombs to the east of the Inner Fortress, the Neft Kuyu and İç Kale are directly linked to the platform. They have also been evaluated in the same group in terms of structural properties and size. Entry to the burial chamber below the Great Platform was most likely facilitated through the Great Platform. However, it is distinct from Urartian examples in terms of size and planning. As for the Arsenal tomb, it does not exhibit any similarities with this group in terms of plan or workmanship, except for its being accessible only through the flat surface of the Inner Fortress and located under the Inner Fortress. The Neft Kuyu and İç Kale tombs are characterised as the early rock-cut tombs of Urartu due to their location. The argument supporting this characterisation is that they are located under the Inner Fortress amidst ditches/moats thought to be made in the early period. However, the fact that the Sardursburg, considered to be an early building of Urartu, was built outside the moat and even at plain level renders these approaches questionable. When the chronology of settlement at Tushpa, which stretches back to before Urartu, is considered, it is hard to imagine that Urartian buildings followed a chronological path of development based on their location.[32]

İç Kale Tomb

The İç kale tomb located west of the Great Platform has been carved into the bedrock roughly in the east-west direction, contrary to other tombs in Van Citadel (Figs. 20–21). The chambers total seven in number including the main hall. The east-facing door of the tomb is 2.85 m in width and 2.66 m in height, while the threshold is 1.25 m in depth. The door is substantially damaged, with pieces of rock broken away in places, and is understood not to be in its original

[31] Tarhan 1989, 385–86; 2011, 307.
[32] Işık and Genç 2012.

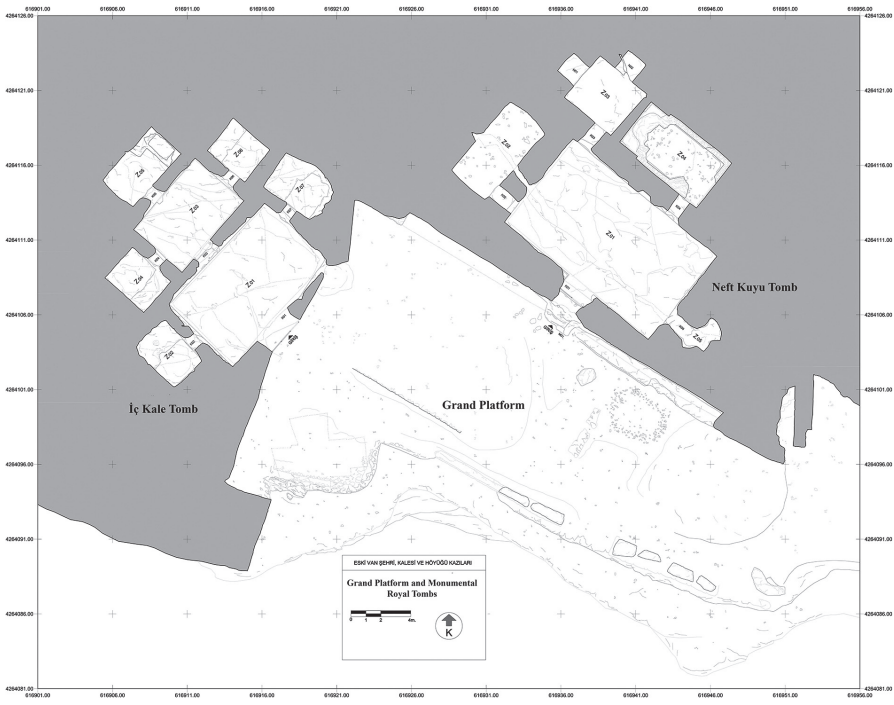

Fig. 20. The area known as the Great Platform; to its north lies the Neft Kuyu tomb, to its west the İç Kale tomb.

state. Alterations must have been made by later users of the tomb according to their needs. In the burial chamber entered from the east, two main halls are identified, interconnected with a doorway and lying along the same axis. The front hall is larger, roughly measuring 9.50 × 6.00 m, and exhibits quite poor rock-cutting workmanship (Fig. 22). The top cover of this hall is built in the shape of a barrel vault and measures approximately 5.63 m in height. The top cover sits on the side walls with a flat moulding/cornice making a one-step protrusion. This rectangular planned main hall has another rectangular room on both sides, both of which also exhibit quite poor workmanship. The corners of the walls are not clearly defined, either rounded off at some points, or the rock here deformed later. These flat-ceilinged burial chambers measure about 11–12 m^2 in surface area and about 2.80 m in height.

West of the main hall, one enters the area that could be termed the second main hall, through a doorway that is 1.60 m in width and 2.00 m in height, similarly damaged. This rectangular planned hall measures 6.30 × 4.35 m and has a ceiling height of 3.83 m. Near to where the side walls meet the ceiling

Fig. 21. İç Kale tomb, plan and sections.

Fig. 22. In the İç Kale tomb, the main hall has been carved in the form of a barrel vault.

(50 cm) a relief of 2–3 cm has been carved (Fig. 23). In this way, a panel has been formed along the ceiling of approximately 50 cm in height and 2–3 cm in depth. A burial chamber has been carved on either side of this hall with a flat ceiling. The workmanship in these burial chambers are of better quality compared with those in the main halls. These chambers, both measuring about 9.5 m^2 in surface area also have flat ceilings, at a height of 2.85 m.

A third burial chamber, entered through a door opened in the west wall of the 'second main hall', is noteworthy for its distinct arrangement. At the north of the chamber, which has a flat ceiling and measures about 13.5 m^2 in surface area and 2.80 m in height, a rock-carved platform is found that is 75 cm in width and reached via uneven steps. Measuring 1.25 × 2.75 m, this platform has a rectangular burial bed carved into it, of 1 × 1.65 m dimensions. On the side walls of the chamber, hollows have been carved at about 70-cm intervals, where nails were placed probably to hang burial gifts. This chamber at the deepest end of the İç Kale tomb strongly suggests a royal burial with its interior architectural attributes.[33]

[33] Sevin 2012, 63.

Fig. 23. In the İç Kale tomb, in the second hall (Z03), a flat cornice is found where the top cover meets the side walls.

Neft Kuyu Tomb

To the north of the Great Platform lies the Neft Kuyu tomb, whose monumental façade on the south overlooks the Old City of Van (Fig. 24). The tomb has been carved into the bedrock on a north-east to south-westerly axis. Measuring 26 × 24.50 m, it is striking and unique due to its monumental façade. The façade has been carved into the bedrock as two panels at about 0.50 cm depth (Figs. 15, 25).

The lower panel measures about 24.00 × 10.20 m. A line of about 2.77 m thickness separates the frame of the lower panel from the higher panel, which measures 22.5 × 4.25 m. This dynamic façade may have been shaped with inspiration from the monumental buildings of Urartu. There is a bench of 50–60 cm width carved into the bedrock along the edge where the façade joins the floor of the platform.

The main hall of the tomb is reached from the platform via a flight of six steps carved into the bedrock. The arched door, with a skylight(?), measures 1.75 m in width and about 3.70 m in height. Upon crossing the door's metre-deep threshold, one finds an L-shaped hollow to the left of the doorway and just above it, a door pivot bearing on the same axis. According to Sevin, this

Fig. 24. View of the monumental façade of the Neft Kuyu tomb from the Old City of Van.

L-shaped hollow, deliberately carved in the floor is for the door pivot to sit in.[34] Sevin also argues that the hollows located on the left surface of the doorway could be related to door locking mechanisms. However, as mentioned earlier, the tombs in question have been used for other purposes for a long period after

[34] Sevin 2012, 46.

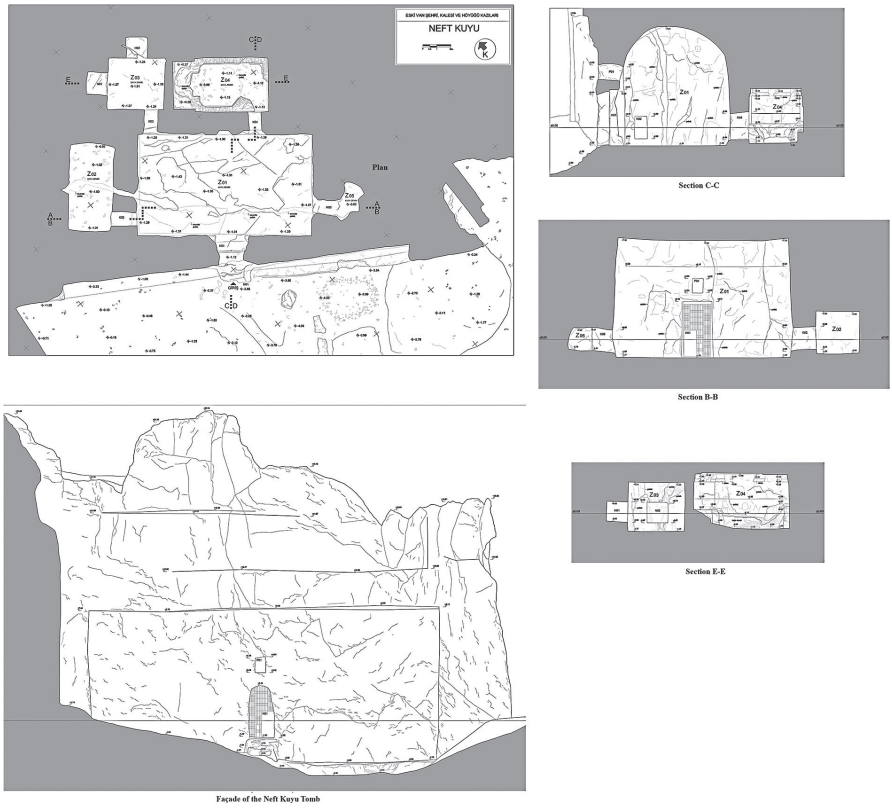

Fig. 25. Neft Kuyu tomb, plan and section.

losing their original function. For this reason, the detailed elements ought to be evaluated with this concern in mind. Lock systems in particular are inevitably prone to undergo many alterations, by nature of their function.

The main hall measuring about 12.00 × 7.00 m in surface area and 8.50 m in height is covered with a barrel vault-shaped ceiling (Fig. 3). It bears parallels with the İç Kale tomb in this respect. The edges where the vault meets the long side walls are adorned with a double-layered cornice with scallops (semicircular notched mouldings). These are believed to represent wooden beams.

The main hall has one other chamber on each side and two other chambers in its north. The chamber on its east side is noteworthy for its poor workmanship, giving the impression that it was somehow left unfinished. The rectangular planned chamber on its west side, measuring 3.00 × 6.00 m, also has workmanship that is quite poor. It has been suggested that such half-built areas

were the product of a deliberate practice, and that they might be refuse areas for burials and gifts.[35]

The two burial chambers at the north are also noteworthy for their workmanship. The eastern one measures about 20 m^2 in surface area, 4.00 m in height and has a flat ceiling. As in the main hall, here, too, the edge where the ceiling meets the side walls is adorned with a two-layered notched moulding. The upper layer protrudes by 33 cm, and the lower layer by 17 cm (Fig. 3). A platform 1.50 m in height is found adjacent to the short western wall of this chamber. It is likely that this platform was used as a burial bed (Fig. 26). The Ottoman tiled wall added later makes it difficult to observe the original construction

The burial chamber immediately next to the above-mentioned chamber is entered though a doorway that is about 1.65 m in depth, 95 cm in width and 1.70 m in height. The square-planned room measures 3.90 × 3.50 m. The north and west walls of the room each have a niche in the centre, both at identical

Fig. 26. In the Neft Kuyu Tomb, the room marked as Z04 in the plan distinguishes itself with its interior arrangement and dimensions. The two-layered notched cornice has been etched on all the walls. The platform at the short eastern wall was most likely used as a burial area. Later-period tile walls are also observed in the room.

[35] Köroğlu 2007; 2008.

height from the floor. Their dimensions, also identical except for very minor variations, are 1.45 m in width, 1.45 m in depth and 1.50 m in height. The niches are extremely large compared with examples in other Urartian royal tombs,[36] suggesting that such examples with large niches, rather than places for burial gifts to be placed, are places for the dead to be buried.

Doğu Odaları Tomb

The areas to the east of the eastern ditch of the Van outcrop have yielded a smaller amount of structural remains from the Urartian period. The Minua fountain and 'Analı Kız' monumental rock niches on the northern slopes, and the Eastern Rooms and the more easterly Columbarium (cremation tomb) on the southern slopes constitute the main structures dated to the Urartian period.

In many respects, the tomb complex defined as the Doğu Odaları exhibits the same properties as the Neft Kuyu and İç Kale tombs situated around the Great Platform. The fact that it was built outside the eastern ditch seems to be related mainly to the rocky terrain being appropriate for it. The south-facing, flattened monumental façade measures 12.60 m in height and about 29.30 m in width (Figs. 2, 27). A wide platform is located in front of the burial chamber, measuring about 17.50 × 7.50 m and descended to via the monumental-looking staircase to the east. The staircase is formed of steps carved into the bedrock, 20–25 cm in height, whose width is 50–60 cm at the top and as wide as 3.00 m around the middle section of the staircase.

A bench, 70–80 cm in width and 16.70 m in length, has been created by carving the bedrock along the long south façade overlooking the platform. The burial chamber is reached via six rock-cut steps ascending from the platform. The rectangular doorway of the burial chamber, measuring 2.72 m in height and 1.36 m in width, has been framed on the outside with an approximately 25 cm-thick moulding. The hollows on the doorway indicate a single-leafed door, similar to other examples. The tomb complex consists of a main hall measuring 9.05 × 5.95 m and three rectangular planned rooms on each side of the main hall. The main hall is 5.96 m in height and the edge where the ceiling meets the side walls is adorned with a flat cornice about 55 cm in height (Fig. 28). As in the other tombs, holes are carved into the wall in certain intervals.

The north room, reached from the main hall via a doorway, has a distinct character with its interior arrangement. The rectangular planned room that narrows down toward the west measures about 4.95 × 3.25 m. The angle of the room has shifted noticeably toward the south compared with the main axis.

[36] Sevin 2012, 53–55.

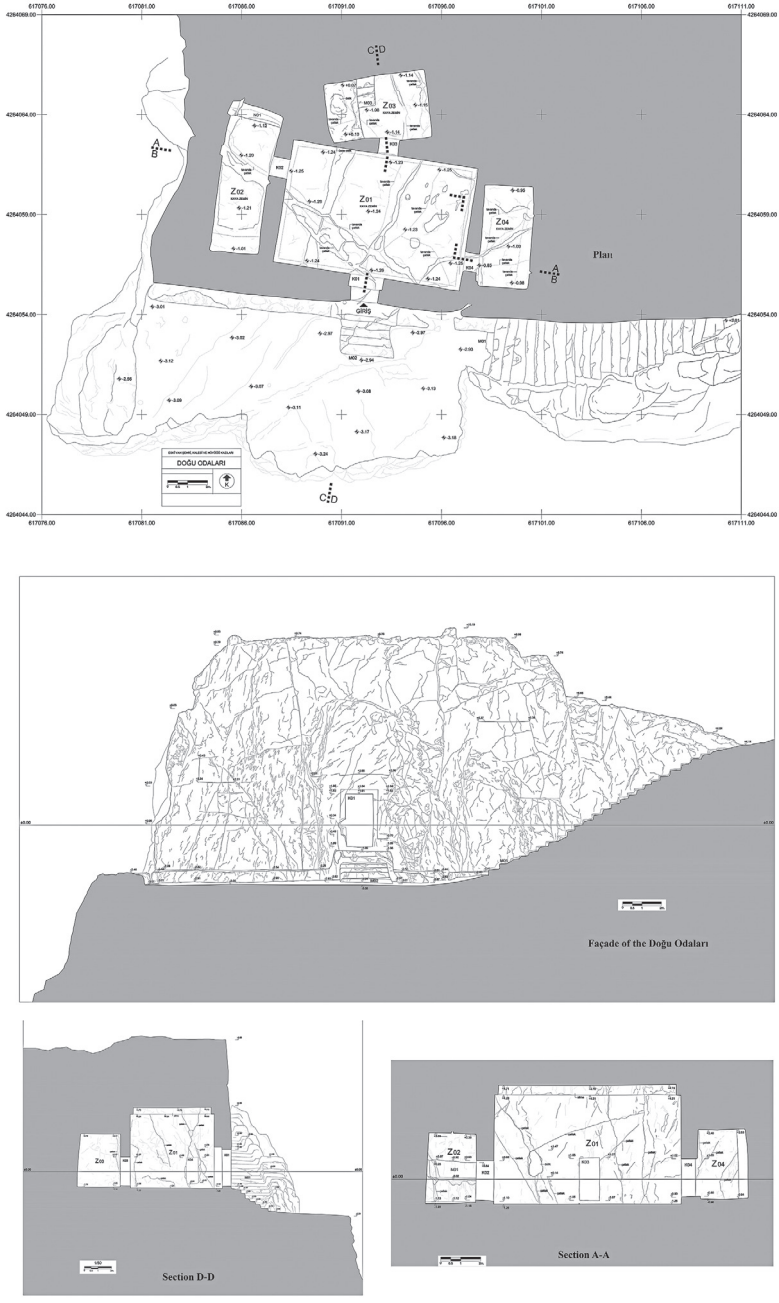

Fig. 27. Doğu Odaları tomb, plan and sections.

Fig. 28. Doğu Odaları tomb; the main hall has a flat ceiling.
A flat cornice lies along the side walls, etched into the bedrock.

As in the Neft Kuyu and İç Kale examples, there is a platform, measuring 1.25 cm in height from the floor and 1.55 m in width, carved into the bedrock in the short west wall of the room. It is reached via three steps. These kinds of platforms have most likely been used as areas for placing the corpse in the sarcophagus or laying it down directly. The burial chambers opened on each side of the hall are rectangular planned and exhibit rough workmanship.

The Columbarium (Cremation Tomb)

The Columbarium located on the southern slopes of Van Citadel presents a different planning system.[37] It is a highly unusual case that it is located in a place easily accessible from the lower city (Fig. 29). The burial chamber, as in the other examples, faces south and has a two-levelled platform not aligned with the same axis. The upper platform measures 5.73 × 3.55 m, and the lower platform about 6.50 × 2.10 m. Stairs formed by rock-cut steps, about 1.30 m in width and 7.15 m in length, were most probably providing access to the tomb (Fig. 30). The burial chamber is entered through a substantially damaged doorway today. Again, the holes carved into the bedrock above the doorway indicate a single-leafed door.

[37] Sevin 1980.

Fig. 29. The door of the Columbarium is small and there is a deep and long hollow carved into the bedrock. The façade has not been flattened. In front of it, there is a two-tiered platform reached via stairs.

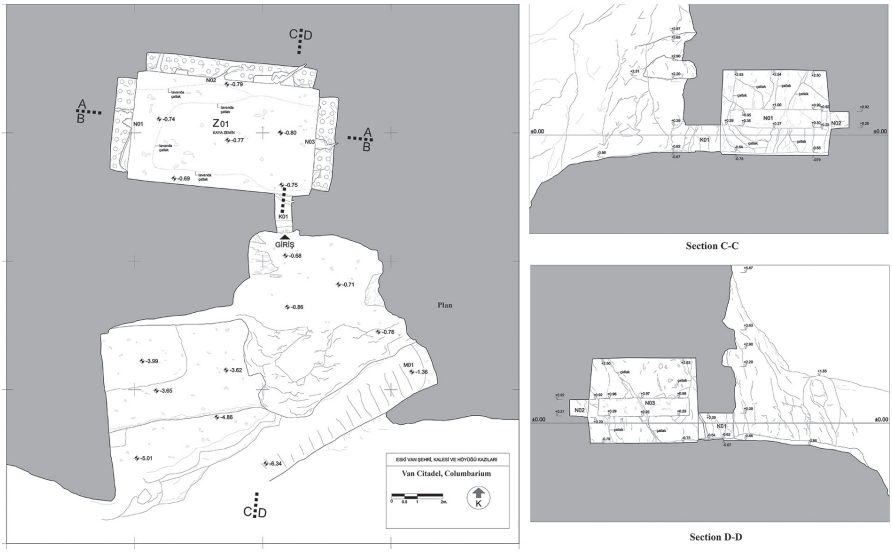

Fig. 30. Van Citadel, Columbarium, plan and sections.

Fig. 31. Van Citadel, Columbarium; niches have been opened parallel to the lengths of the wall, with holes carved onto their bases, most likely for urns to be placed in them.

The main hall reached through the doorway is opened in an east–west direction, has a flat ceiling and measures 4.23 × 7.15 m. The burial chamber consists of a single room, with rectangular niches opened along the long north wall and short east–west walls (Fig. 31). The niches are at about 1 m from the floor, 0.70 m in height and about 0.75 m in depth. Extending parallel to the lengths of the wall, the niches have holes carved onto their bases in two lines, for urns to be placed in them. These holes are generally accepted to have been used for placing jars containing the ashes of the deceased.

2. Subterranean Burial Chambers

The subterranean burial chambers are the most common type of grave in Urartian territory. They can be classified under two main groups: stone-built and rock-cut. However, there is a diverse range of examples under both groups. Generally, these multiple variations provide important information about Urartu burial practices. Subterranean stone-built tombs, discovered through archaeological and illegal excavations in eastern Anatolia, have been identified in particular as belonging to the Urartian period. Undoubtedly, the finds and

burial traditions have guided the chronology; however, we should bear in mind that these graves might reflect characteristics different from burial traditions and material culture of the communities leading a provincial life away from the centre. For example, the discovery of subterranean stone/rock-cut tombs in Van Citadel and in nearby necropolis areas such as Altıntepe and Kalecik, can be shown as examples reflecting the Urartian central region's characteristics. However, it can also be interpreted as a tendency to take advantage of the existing geological formations.

Many subterranean burial chambers have been discovered during archaeological excavation of centres around the Lake Van basin, such as Karagündüz,[38] Dilkaya,[39] Ernis-Evditepe,[40] Adilcevaz,[41] Yoncatepe[42] and Altıntepe.[43] Burial centres discovered during excavations in Ernis, Karagündüz, Yoncatepe and Dilkaya, provide important information for establishing Urartu grave typology and chronology.

Subterranean Stone-Built Tombs

Subterranean stone-built tombs usually consist of stone walls within pits dug into the ground in proportion with the size of the tomb. Side walls are corbelled walls narrowing toward the ceiling. This way, the narrow ceiling part could be covered with parallel-set flat stone slabs. Chambers usually have long rectangular plans. In some examples, the length of the rooms reaches 6 m. Their widths vary between 1.5 and 2 m, and heights between 1.5 and 2.5 m (Figs. 32–33).

The main characteristic of the Urartian burial style is multiple burial. Multiple burials have taken place in the burial chambers, their number varying according to the chambers' size and period of use. For example, 106 burials were found in the 'Karagündüz 8' grave. The burials have been placed in the hocker position within the chambers.[44]

Considering the dimensions, it is technically impossible for a burial chamber to encapsulate so many burials. In light of the finds it is understood that in order to create room for the new burials in the chamber, the older burials would be pushed deep into the bottom of the grave, along with their burial gifts.[45]

[38] Sevin and Kavaklı 1996.
[39] Çilingiroğlu 1993.
[40] Belli and Konyar 2003; Erzen 1963.
[41] Öğün 1978a; 1978b.
[42] Konyar 2004.
[43] Sevin 2012, 107–34.
[44] Sevin and Kavaklı 1995, 339; 1996.
[45] Sevin and Kavaklı 1995; 1996.

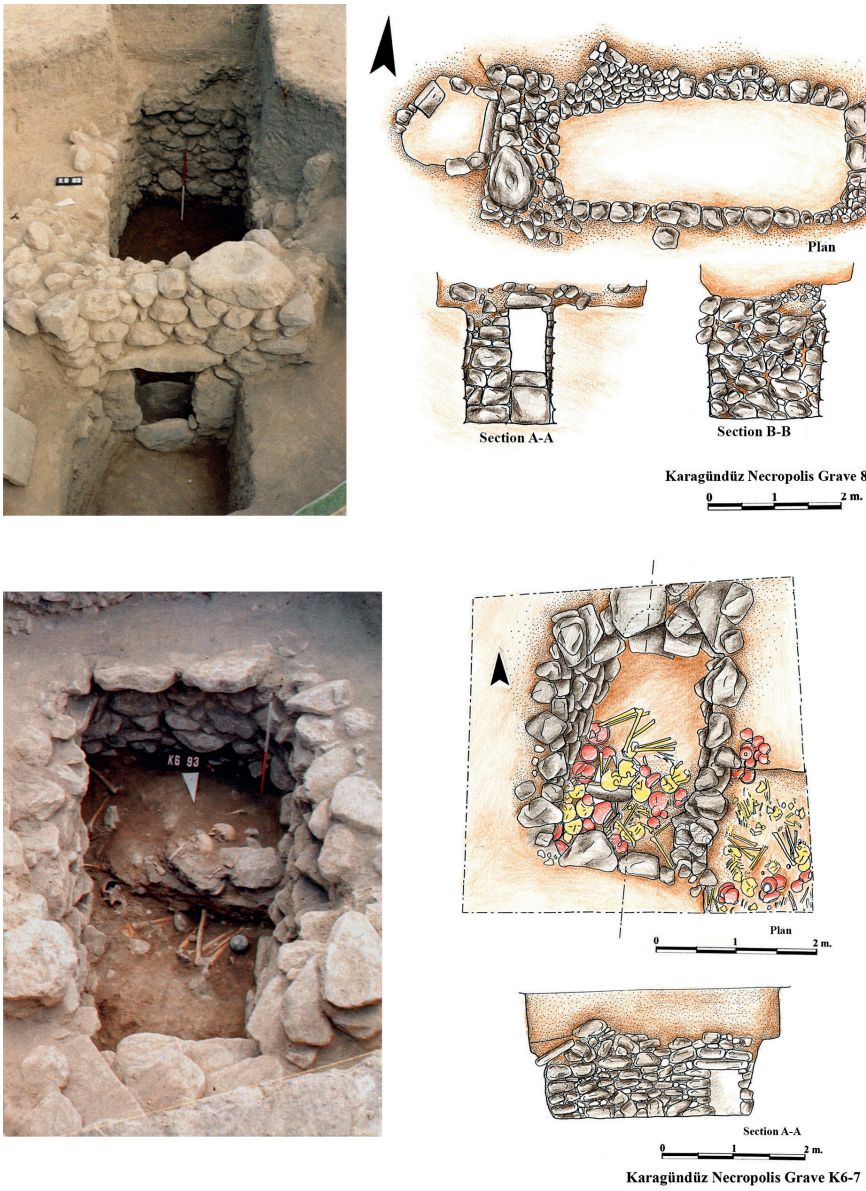

Fig. 32. In the Karagündüz necropolis in Van, subterranean stone walls have been built with the corbelling technique. Multiple burials have been made in the graves (after Sevin and Kavaklı 1996, 18.5, 21.8, 22).

Fig. 33. In grave M3 at Yoncatepe, Van, subterranean stone walls have been built with the corbelling technique. The tomb is entered via a well-shaped *dromos*. The top cover has been formed with flat flagstone blocks.

Nevertheless, special practices have also been discovered. It was observed in the Yoncatepe 3 grave that the skulls were gathered in the same area, while some were placed in pots. In the Karagündüz 'K 10' grave, approximately ten skulls were placed in a hollow carved at the furthest end of the chamber.

The multiple burial approach have made it possible to develop a system of grave architecture that allowed continuous access. A *dromos* built as a stone wall or as a shaft dug directly into the ground connects the tomb to the surface. In all examples at Karagündüz, access is through a doorway opened on the short wall of the chambers, and is covered with flat flagstone block. In the Yoncatepe examples, the entrance is through the top, through a square or rectangular opening cut on the part of the ceiling next to the short wall of the tomb-chamber and covered with a cover stone.

There are also examples without a *dromos*. In these examples, the tomb-chamber was probably entered by removing one of the flagstones making up the top cover.

One can observe alternative burial areas created in some of the tomb-chambers. In the tombs of Karagündüz and Yoncatepe, a second or third burial area has been identified, connected to the main tomb-chamber.[46] Yoncatepe 6 grave is a good example of a multi-chamber subterranean stone-built tomb. A second burial chamber has been opened up in the south-east quarter of the 5.80 × 170 m tomb-chamber located above. This second burial chamber below was covered with flagstone slabs on the top, and is entered via four steps descending from the main burial chamber. A third burial chamber was opened in the clay soil in the eastern part of this area.

These areas in the Karagündüz necropolis, which are smaller than the main burial chambers, and some of which are accessible only by hand, are usually connected to the burial chambers by small openings. There are areas at Yoncatepe that were used for the same purpose, but are quite large compared with the Karagündüz examples, almost forming second burial chambers, opened in the hard clay soil and having barrel vaults.[47] It has been established that skulls and finds belonging to the older burials were collected in these areas as new burials were brought into the burial chamber. This multi-chamber planning concept in the subterranean chamber tombs can be accepted as small-scale reflections of Urartian rock-cut tombs.

[46] Konyar 2004.
[47] Belli and Konyar 2001, 186.

It has been established that cremation burials were also made in the tombs beside simple inhumations. In particular, human bones and ashes were found in Yoncatepe 3[48] and Karagündüz 5 and 8,[49] confirming the practice of cremation. The absence of urns in these graves suggests that the dead were placed in the burial chamber after cremation, their bones perhaps wrapped in fabric. The presence of cremations and regular burials together in burial chambers may indicate the burial of individuals coming from different traditions or cultural backgrounds in the same burial chambers. The social status, sex, or epidemic illnesses may have determined the type of burial as well. However, there is no archaeological evidence to indicate such distinctions.

The pottery found in burial chambers are vessels in which food and drinks for the dead were placed. The dead were usually buried together with their personal adornment items and gifts. As evidenced from finds in the tomb-chambers, some of them *in situ*, iron bracelets or anklets, iron or bronze clothing/decorative pins, iron and bronze rings, necklaces made of various stone beads, and daggers and knives, almost all of which are made from iron, were placed in the graves together with the body.[50]

Dog burials, found in the Yoncatepe graves beside human burials, reflect another striking Urartu burial tradition. However, only the example in grave M5 was found *in situ*.[51] In many other graves, tens of dog skulls and bones were found. Piles of bovine, ovine and caprine bones were also found in the same places. There is no archaeological evidence to explain this extraordinary burial concept in tomb-chambers. Possible epidemic illnesses seen in animals might have caused the collective burials.

The chronology of the stone-built chamber tombs, which are predominantly located in provincial regions not connected with the royal centres, is problematic. Underground stone-built tombs at Karagündüz, Dilkaya and Yoncatepe have been dated to the Early Iron Age based on grooved pottery retrieved from them. However, when groups of finds from these necropoleis are assessed as a whole, some problems appear with the chronology: red-slipped Urartian pottery, Urartian decorative pins, and fibulae that could not be dated in this region to before the 8th century BC come together with grooved pottery in some graves. I have suggested that at least the necropolis areas at Karagündüz, Dilkaya and Yoncatepe should be dated to the Middle Iron Age, based on an overall assessment of the material groups and the state of the finds.

[48] Konyar 2004.
[49] Sevin and Kavaklı 1995; 1996.
[50] Konyar 2004.
[51] Belli and Konyar 2001.

On the other hand, the earliest examples of the chamber-tomb tradition can be found at Ernis necropolis (Fig. 34).[52] It is possible to observe *kurgan*-type burials and chamber tombs in the same area of this necropolis. Beside examples with multiple stone cists and graves surrounded by a line of stones, large graves with a *dromos* can also be observed. Insufficient information about the excavations carried out in the area in the 1960s makes it difficult to assess the pottery finds.

However, because the pottery is generally formed of groups consisting of dark surfaces, mammilations, incised ornaments and teats, it is observed that the Karagündüz, Dilkaya and Yoncatepe examples indicate differing characteristics in relation to their typology and the group to which they belong. In terms of group, perhaps this indicates a more local and earlier chronology. From this perspective, we can discuss parallels with the cultures of the southern Caucasus. The typology and pottery collection of the Ernis grave can be considered as reflections of the cultures of north-eastern Anatolia, especially in light of the specified dark properties. It is probable that the dark-surfaced pottery, excavated from graves in the regions of Georgia, Gence-Qazak (Azerbeijan) and north-western Iran, entered Anatolia from the north-east. These pots, which draw attention with their teats and engraved ornaments, reflect differences between the regions and indicate sub-cultural groups.

Subterranean Carved Graves

Beside the subterranean stone-built tombs, rock-cut burial chambers are also common in Urartu. Such graves were easily carved around areas filled with rock formations. The most extensive information regarding subterranean rock-cut tombs can be found in the necropoleis of Altıntepe[53] (Fig. 11) and Kalecik[54] (Fig. 10).

The areas that the inhabitants of Tushpa used for burials are located in the region north of the Van Citadel. The southern border of the necropolis, which is thought to spread until the Kalecik Fortress in the north, have yet to be identified. However, it is clear that it extends north of the fortress into sectors of the modern city. The illegal excavations and surface finds in areas just north of Tushpa support this. In particular, the northern areas of the Tushpa necropolis have a limestone fabric that can sometimes be observed on the surface. For this reason, this terrain is rather convenient for building subterranean burial chambers.

[52] Erzen 1963; Belli and Konyar 2003.
[53] Sevin 2012, 107–34.
[54] Çavuşoğlu and Biber 2005; 2008; Çavuşoğlu *et al*. 2009.

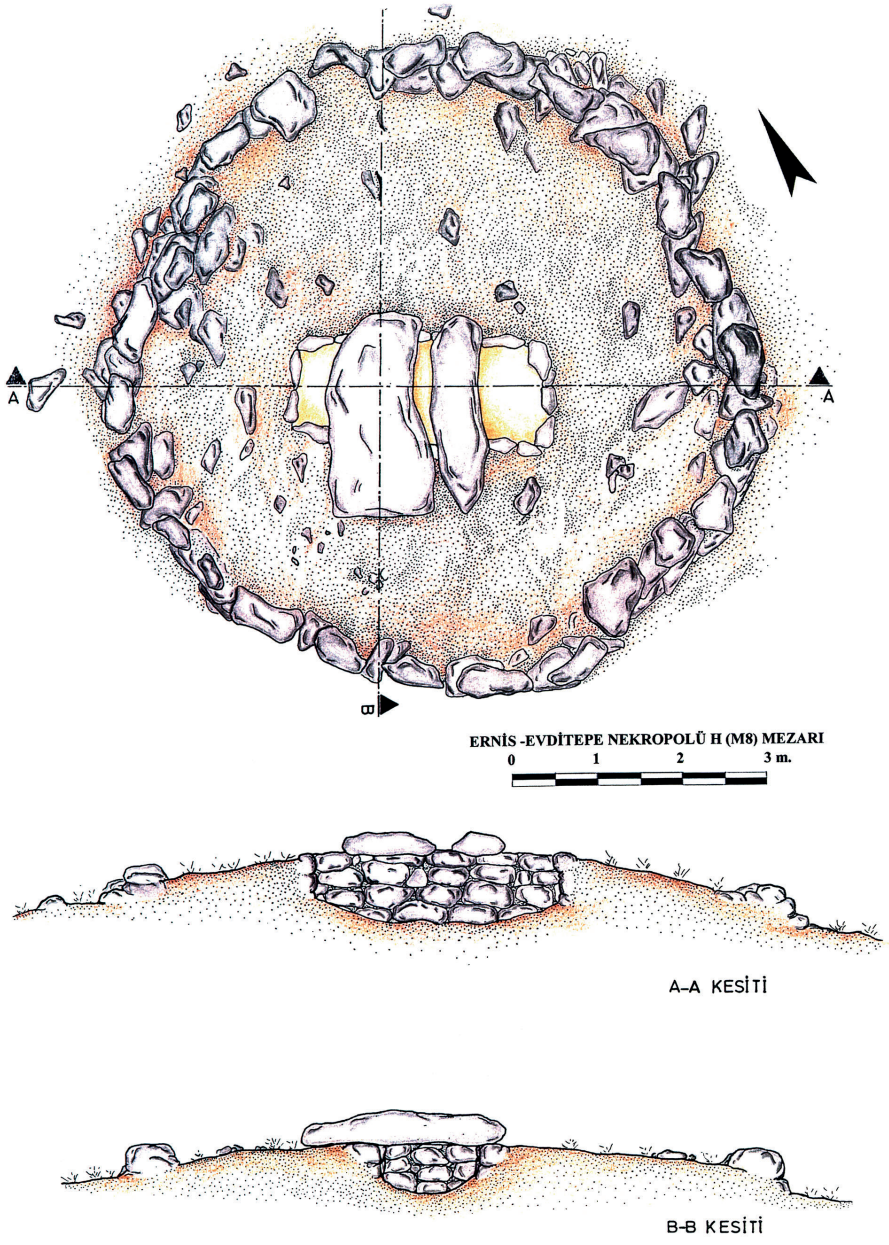

Fig. 34. In the Evditepe necropolis, in Erciş-Ernis, some graves identified were marked with chambers of stones around them. In the centre of the area lies the stone wall burial chamber. In some cases, multiple burial chambers can be found in these areas. This type of grave and burial tradition has parallels particularly with mounds dated to the Late Bronze and Early Iron Ages in the Caucasus.

Thirty-five rock-cut tombs have been unearthed during the continuing archaeological investigation of the Altıntepe necropolis.[55] The dimensions, room numbers, orientation and interior layouts of the tomb-chambers vary. The doorway of the tomb-chamber is reached through a square or rectangular shaft-shaped *dromos* from the surface. The main burial areas are entered through the *dromos*, mainly via vertically opening doors, some of which are arch-shaped, that are mostly placed vertically on the *dromos*. These doorways are covered with flat flagstones. In some examples the *dromos* connects two different chambers. Again, in some examples the small niches on the *dromos* walls make entry into the tombs easier. The floor of the burial chambers is further below. Besides examples of large chambers having carved rock walls, opened-up niches and laid-out benches, there are examples of smaller-sized multiple-chambered tombs. As well as chambers of square or rectangular plan with rounded corners, there are oval, circular and irregular examples. The side walls are generally not flat; the ceilings have been formed with round passages. The ceilings of some flatter examples hold arches. There are niche openings in the walls of some of the rooms. It is highly probable that the small niches were used to place burial gifts. The larger niches were most probably used as burial beds and burial areas.

In light of their planning, the Altıntepe subterranean rock-cut tombs appear as badly crafted miniature copies of Urartian royal tombs. It is difficult to acquire credible information about the burial style and date of these chambers due to looting by treasure hunters. However, the hunters have themselves specified the period of the burial gifts as the Middle Iron Age. Apart from this, it is probable that these tombs were used until, or even after, the fall of the kingdom. The burial practices of the tomb-chambers indicate multiple burials due to the existence of another room. It has been verified that the cremation burials were in the same area as normal graves. There is not much difference between their burial gifts: iron swords and daggers, bronze belts, decorative pins, earrings and rings, beaded necklaces and other decorative items are the main grave-goods, along with the pottery in which food and drink for the dead were placed.

Further north of the Altıntepe necropolis spreads the Kalecik necropolis; within this area, the subterranean rock-cut tombs have all been looted by treasure hunters. Cleaning works were undertaken in 2004 during authorised excavations of tomb-chambers robbed by treasure hunters. Like the graves in Altıntepe, those in this area open up to a soft limestone layer. Once again, these rather deep burial chambers can be entered by a couple of steps through a well-shaped *dromos*. The entrance of the burial chambers has been covered

[55] Sevin 2012, 111.

with flat flagstones. Among the Kalecik tombs, in the ones with large rooms, differing in dimension between 4.50 × 2.40 m and 1.80 × 2.90 m, niches have been cut into the side walls. Niches have not been found in the smaller burial chambers. The chambers are generally laid out in a rectangular plan wherein the corners have been rounded, or in square plan, while some feature benches. Apart from this, there are also examples with no definite shape. The height of the tomb-chambers is not great (1.39 m). In burial chamber K24, benches have been laid out in three directions and ten niches have been opened up in the side walls. In grave K25, however, benches have been laid out on all four sides and a dozen arched niches have been opened up along the walls. Since all the tombs had been robbed, there is little data left regarding burial traditions. However, *in-situ* finds of eight skulls and skeletal remains have been excavated in the eastern quarter of the north wall. The assembly of the skulls in specific locations is a situation commonly found in the Karagündüz and Yoncatepe tombs.

Alongside recent discoveries, the *in-situ* finds extracted by an excavation headed by Baki Öğün in the 1970s in the Adilcevaz, Dedeli and Yukarı Göçmez subterranean rock-cut tombs are noteworthy.[56] The Adilcevaz tomb is once again entered through a well-shaped *dromos*. The chamber measures approximately 2.55 × 1.68 m and is approximately 1 m underneath its *dromos* base. For this reason, the tomb-chamber can be entered with a couple of steps. A niche, 1.15 m in length, 0.37 m in depth and 0.70 m in height, has been opened up in the eastern wall of the chamber. The *in-situ* urns within the niche relay important information about its function; this confirms that these were areas in which urns and burial gifts were placed. The other finds and skeletons are piled up in a corner of the tomb-chamber, much like the examples found in Karagündüz and Yoncatepe. Amongst the finds are earthenware bowls and jugs, bronze bracelets, gold fibulae, bronze pins and wooden furniture.

The Dedeli and Yukar Göçmez tombs, which were excavated in Patnos, differ from the others with regard to their ceilings, which were carved in the shape of barrel vaults. Along the walls of the Yukarı Göçmez grave, which is carved in an irregular rectangular formation measuring approximately 4.92 × 3.87 m, a bench is laid out. This bench is measured as approximately 0.50 m in width and 25 cm in height. Furthermore, niches have been opened up in the two long walls, and on the wall across the entrance of this tomb-chamber. The Yukarı Göçmez tomb, in particular, shows great similarities in architectural layout with Kalecik and Altıntepe. In the Dedeli tomb, a *dromos* that goes down by 2.40 m

[56] Öğün 1978a; 1978b.

draws attention. The tomb-chamber is entered via an approximately 95 cm opening on the *dromos* surface. This tomb-chamber, measuring 2.50 × 1.80 m, is roughly laid out in a rectangular plan. On the short wall located in the west of the chamber, a niche can be found, measuring 70 cm in width, 65 cm in height and 70 cm in depth. Again, on the north wall of the chamber, another niche of smaller size can be found; this measures 45 cm in width, 45 cm in height and 38 cm in depth. Within this chamber, many *in-situ* finds have been excavated.

As mentioned previously, the locations of the subterranean chamber tombs and the finds discovered in them indicate that they were used from the Middle Iron Age until the fall of the kingdom. The Kalecik, Adilcevaz, Dedeli and Yukarı Göçmez tombs draw attention with their single-chamber layouts. It is understood however that the Altıntepe graves were formed mostly of multiple-chambered layouts. However these findings do not indicate a chronological differentiation.

Some of the examples from the Altıntepe and Kalecik necropoleis, which are on occasion claimed as the capital's necropoleis, reflect in many ways miniature versions of the royal tombs. The multi-chamber planning practice and the layout of the niches are clear examples of this similarity.

3. Stone Cist Graves

Another grave-type used in eastern Anatolia, at least from the Early Bronze Age onwards and seen also with Urartians, is the stone cist grave. This type of grave has been found during the Yoncatepe[57] and Dilkaya[58] excavations and at the Karagündüz necropolis. However, the Urartians usually preferred some other type of grave. Stone cist graves were usually of square or rectangular plan, formed of flat stone blocks set vertically. The top cover was made by setting one or two flat stone slabs on top of the vertical stone blocks. As opposed to a grave with a single burial at Yoncatepe, there is a stone cist grave with seven burials at Dilkaya. Grave M2 at the Karagündüz necropolis, which is similar to the burial-chamber concept in terms of size and number of burials, but which reflects the sarcophagus-type in architectural layout, also has multiple burials.[59]

[57] Konyar 2004.
[58] Çilingiroğlu 1991a; 1991b; 1993, 478.
[59] Sevin and Kavaklı 1995, 335.

There are two types of burial practice in the stone cist graves of Dilkaya: those of cremated bodies, and graves in the hocker position. Stone cist grave no. 1 is rectangular and measures 0.70 × 1.10 m[60] (Fig. 35). Eight burials were made in it: the number signifies that this grave has been in use for a long time. This kind of burial usually consists of single graves. That eight graves had been buried on top of each other in the Dilkaya example signifies an important differentiation.

Grave no. 2, in which a cremation is placed, measures 0.40 × 0.44 m. The grave has been placed vertically placed and is formed of flagstones that are between 0.40 and 0.50 m in height.

A stone cist grave has been excavated in the area adjacent to the chamber tomb of the Yoncatepe necropolis, lying in its southern part. A cover stone measuring 90 cm in width and 105 cm in length, which is 30 cm in the 'F 16' plan square, has also been discovered.[61] This grave, laid out on an east–west axis, is covered by a flagstone that is also laid to the same axis. The grave, surrounded by flat flagstones placed vertically on the side walls, measures 1.02 m in length (east to west), 72 cm in width (north to south) and 60 cm in depth. A child's grave placed in the hocker position has been excavated here; the head of the deceased, laid out on the left side of the southern quarter of the grave, looks eastwards. Five beads (now heavily damaged) made out of frit that adorned the neck area of the deceased, have been discovered during examination of the skeleton.

4. Simple Earth Inhumations

Graves where the body is placed in a pit dug into the ground are defined as simple inhumations. Burials are usually in the hocker position.[62] Examples with single individuals and simple inhumations of multiple individuals have been found. This situation indicates that the multiple-burial concept in chamber tombs might have been practised in simple inhumations. It has been observed that burial gifts and food were also placed in simple inhumations. There is no significant difference in the quality of goods left as burial gifts in simple inhumations compared with chamber tombs.

Ten simple inhumations were discovered in the Yoncatepe necropolis.[63] All those discovered until recently were concentrated in two areas: the first in the

[60] Çilingiroğlu 1991, 30.
[61] Konyar 2004, 226, 227.
[62] Çilingiroğlu 1993; Sevin 2012, 129–31; Konyar 2004.
[63] Belli and Kavaklı 2001, 376; Konyar 2004, 227.

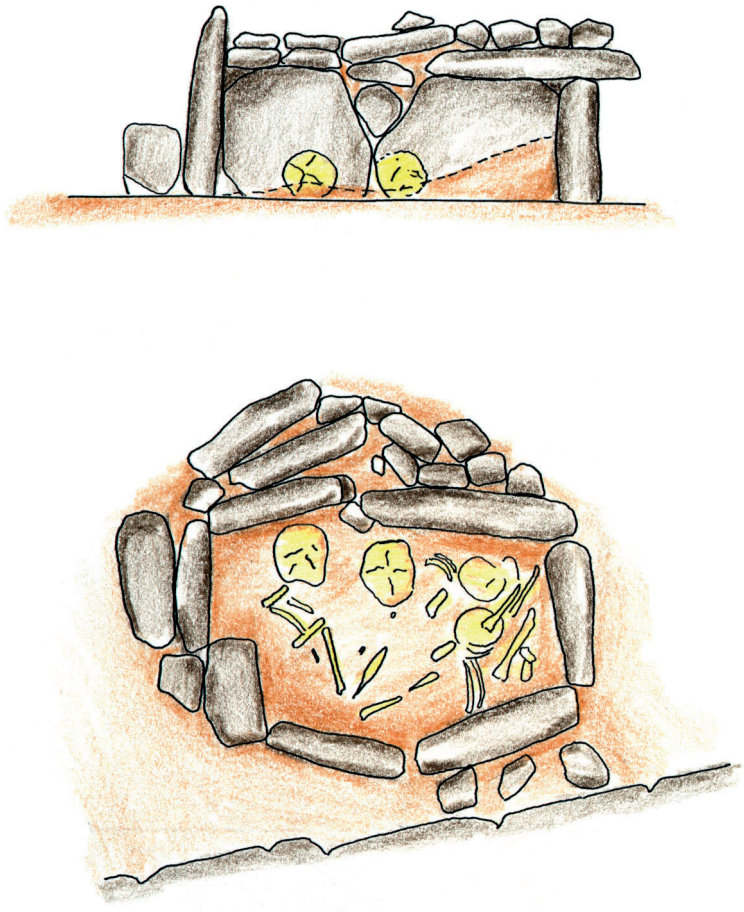

Fig. 35. Dilkaya necropolis, Van; stone cist grave (after Çilingiroğlu 1991, fig. 03.1).

area west of graves M6 and M5, comprises four graves with bodies in the hocker position, in a north–south direction, some containing small examples of pottery were found in which the feet of the dead were placed, along with a grave gift consisting of a multiple-hooped bronze ring; the second is formed of graves laid out in a very complicated manner along a north–south axis around a large flagstone, the flagstone itself laid out on an east–west axis, lying directly west of the sarcophagus group. In this area, human bones and eight skulls were discovered. These skulls have not been laid out in a coherent formation.

The inhumations discovered in the Van Citadel mound draw attention due to their location. During the 2010 excavations, a simple inhumation in hocker position was excavated, located in one of the corners of the outer walls (damaged sporadically) of the early stages of the 15-room Urartian building level.[64] This level was excavated between 1989 and 1991 by M. Taner Tarhan.[65] However, stratigraphic uncertainty in this area poses a problem in defining the relationship between the structure and the grave. The passive protection applied to the walls during this period makes clear analysis of the subject even harder.

Four inhumations were discovered in the Van Altıntepe necropolis.[66] These are similar to the Yoncatepe examples due to the placement of several graves in the same area. As mentioned before, the characteristics of the grave-goods found in these simple earth inhumations are especially similar to those of the personal burial gifts of other graves. For example, in Altıntepe grave TM2, the *in-situ* fingers of the deceased placed in hocker position, are adorned with bronze rings, while the neck area was adorned with decorative pins, and the wrists and neck with beaded necklaces. These are the classic finds of Urartu graves. It is hard to identify the socio-economic position of those buried in this type of simple earth inhumation.

5. Urns

While ‘urns’ reflect a grave type and burial tradition by themselves, they can also be discussed in association with other burial types. An urn is actually a clay vessel with a short neck, swollen body, and flat base, in which the remains of the dead are placed after cremation.[67] Individuals were most probably cremated

[64] Konyar 2011b, 153.
[65] Tarhan 1994.
[66] Sevin 2012.
[67] Derin 1994.

wearing their clothes and the remnants were placed in the pots along with the burial gifts. In some cases, the urn was placed next to the burial gifts.[68] Urns have been placed in niches opened in rock-cut tombs, in the walls of chamber tombs, or in recesses or channels carved in natural bedrock, in the ground or on rocky surfaces.[69] An upside-down globular bowl usually covers the mouth of the vessel. The vessels were sometimes supported by small stones spread around them. There are single examples as well as groups formed by placing several urns side by side. The number of recesses in the cremation burial in the Van outcrop suggests that multiple urn burials could be clustered together.

There are usually three holes in the shoulder of an urn, but some examples have one, two or five holes.

Many urn burials have been uncovered *in situ* at Urartian necropoleis in Iğdır Melekli, Adilcevaz, Dedeli, Liç, Altıntepe, Habibuşağı and Dilkaya.

Iğdır Melekli,[70] which was excavated at the beginning of the 20th century, relays important information about urn graves. In some examples single urns, in others groups of urns have been placed in holes carved in the earth or the rock. Stone cist tombs or burial chambers were created for these urns. The burial gifts surrounding the urns are noteworthy and it is understood that they were placed intentionally.

Single urns have been placed in the rock carvings located in the Adilcevaz tombs. Urns placed in squares formed by the flagstones placed vertically, almost like sarcophagi, can be found in the Liç graves.

The most recent information regarding urn graves in Urartu come from Altıntepe. Here, the urns have been placed inside holes carved in the earth or bedrock[71] (Fig. 36).

Burial gifts placed inside or around the urns differ little from those found in other types of Urartian graves: decorative pins, iron knives and daggers, bronze bracelets, earrings and rings, along with beaded necklaces are the most frequently observed gifts. In some instances, swords, bronze belts and bronze vessels can also be observed.

[68] Barnett 1963.
[69] Barnett 1963; Işık 1987; Çilingiroğlu 1993; Sevin 2012, 126–28.
[70] Barnett 1963.
[71] Sevin 2012, 126.

Fig. 36. Urn burial found at Altıntepe necropolis, Van. The urns are sometimes placed by themselves in holes dug into the ground and supported with stones around them. In some other cases, they are placed side by side in rock-cut hollows or in channels opened in the ground (after Sevin 2012, 118, 122).

Conclusions

Perhaps the most characteristic reflections of Urartian culture are to be observed in tombs. The rock-cut tombs, carved into the bedrock on a monumental scale, are a practice unique to the Urartians. Thousands of artefacts of Urartian culture and art have been discovered in subterranean burial chambers. From pottery production to bronze craftsmanship and from seal cutting to weapon technology, the finds obtained from tombs have significant importance in building up a picture of Urartu. These finds are the leading data for identifying of Urartian art and culture. Attempts can be made to explain the demographic structure of the society, food habits and the like through the skeletal remains.

Especially in rock-cut tombs, it was impossible to identify the original state of the burials. Many of the tombs were re-used during later periods as well. As for subterranean chamber tombs, despite the large amount of illegal excavation, numerous archaeological excavations have been conducted: prominent in recent years are excavations of tombs at Karagündüz, Dilkaya, Yoncatepe, Hakkari, Altıntepe and Kalecik.

Our reference point for Urartian tombs should be the royal rock-cut tombs at the Van Citadel. At this point, the Horhor Cave which could be dated through the inscription of Argishti I, should be the primary reference for similar tombs.

Their most characteristic features are being located within the citadel and their multi-chambered arrangement. Constructions of monumental scale are unique to the capital, whereas in rural parts, smaller-scale versions, built by rulers probably connected to the central government, can be observed. The origins of rock-cut tombs lie in the underfloor burial chambers that were constructed in the citadel of the Assyrian capitals. This type of tomb, constructed with bricks and formed by a top cover with a fake arch and in the shape of a barrel vault, is earlier in date than the Urartian rock-cut tombs and structurally has many differences. However, the characteristics of Urartian settlement and their craftsmanship in the art of rock-carving might have been influenced by the Assyrians, then developed into a new, different style.

The subterranean burial chambers can be identified through their architectural features, locations and above all through finds with Urartian characteristics made in the chambers. The subterranean stone-built and rock-cut tombs are the most common types. Their most significant feature is that they were built with *dromos*-type entrances and house multiple burials. The burial chambers are usually located outside the settlement and they form a unity in themselves. Multi-chamber arrangements can be observed in rock-cut tombs. In these aspects, they reflect the style of the royal rock-cut tombs. For the bulk of the graves in Altıntepe, which lies just north of the capital and is thought to have been the necropolis of the city of Tushpa, this multi-chamber plan is observed frequently.

Urartian burial traditions can be followed in the subterranean chamber burial tombs. Several *in-situ* finds during archaeological excavation illuminate the burial traditions. Multiple burials were practised in the graves. Inhumations were in a foetal position. Cremation burials can also be observed in the same graves. A large amount of jewellery and pottery was placed in the graves as burial gifts. Certain groups of archaeological material have been taken as reference points for dating the graves. For instance, grooved pottery and iron accessories form a main reference for the graves to be dated to the Early Iron Age. Red-slipped Urartian pottery, bronze pins and seals are accepted as groups of finds indicating an Urartian period for the graves.

In dating graves, post-Urartian finds and items that could be categorised as such, should be given careful consideration, for there are cultural features which were sustained even after the state structure was destroyed. One can follow this continuity particularly with small finds. Thus, the possibility that some practices that are defined as the ‘Urartian People’s Graves’ might point to a later chronology should be discussed too. The same point is valid for graves that were dated to the Early Iron Age based mainly on grooved pottery and iron accessories, because here it is possible to observe parallel finds of

these uncovered in Urartian and post-Urartian layers. It should be stated that the group of finds dated to the early period in these graves was shaped through the socio-economic preferences of the rural communities that maintained the local culture. In other words, red-slipped Urartian pottery and bronze pins, understood to be used within elite circles, were not used as burial gifts in the rural communities. On the other hand, their use was more common in the necropoleis of Altıntepe and Kalecik, where grooved pottery and iron accessories were not preferred. Hence, it is possible to offer a chronological appraisal only for groups of finds that were discovered within a context. Dating reliant upon a certain type of material will not yield very accurate results.

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URARTIAN POTTERY

Aylin Ü. ERDEM

Abstract

Urartian pottery is one of the little known topics in Urartian studies. Until the 1970s, scholars concentrated on red polished palace vases and pithoi within the citadels. However, after the 1980s, the Bastam and Ayanis excavations demonstrated that a wide range of pottery traditions existed in Urartian culture. Among these, service vessels, cooking and daily usage pots, and other plain vessels can be counted. All of these ware types enlighten us about production technology as well as their function. In this study, instead of approaching Urartian pottery only by ware groups, I will review it in terms of the appearance of new traditions, continuation of earlier traditions and uncharacteristic traditions, based mainly on Ayanis excavation pottery.

Pottery technology[1] in Urartian territory, especially in the core homeland, faced considerable changes after the establishment of the Urartian state, among them the appearance of fast wheel- and mass-production, of marks including both potters' marks and capacity signs, and the appearance of new groups of ware and new forms (mainly of high quality).

Urartian territory contained different cultures, marked by a lack of homogeneity across the whole Urartian 'space' from heartland to periphery. The hard geographical conditions and climate enabled local cultures to survive.[2] Moreover, the structure of the state was that of a confederacy of different tribes and this permitted the existence of semi-independent cultures in the Urartian highlands. The Urartian ruling class always sought the creation of a more integral union as a matter of state politics. The attempt at state standardisation, seen in building works such as fortresses, citadels and cities, was also applied to pottery. Thus the term 'Urartian pottery' represents the creation of a new style of pottery tradition by state interference. This new style was expressed not

[1] Urartian pottery in this study is discussed mainly on the basis of material excavated at Ayanis between 1995 and 2011. I would like to thank warmly Prof. Dr Altan Çilingiroğlu for allowing me to study the Ayanis Fortress material. I also thank Tuğçe Tiriş, MA student in the Archaeology Department of Ege University, for her contribution to the drawings.

[2] Zimansky 1985, 9–31.

only in high-quality serving pots in red polished ware but also by some other groups of serving and storage pots.

Pottery excavated from mounds, both in the heartland and periphery, displays more local character than that from fortresses and citadels. New style pottery is found in mounds to a varying degree while local traditions survived. In general, the strength of the new pottery traditions decreases according to the distance of the mounds from the home territory, and it also depends on the level of interactions between the central state and the peripheral tribal territories.

It should be noted that Urartian culture is known mainly from state buildings such as fortresses and citadels, since it is there that most archaeological excavations have been conducted. (Local cultures and daily life in Urartian territory are less well known.) Thus, the ceramic repertory obtained from fortresses and citadels, particularly from the heartland, has been used extensively in our understanding of the characteristic features of the Urartian pottery.[3]

A considerable part of Urartian pottery belongs to the monochrome tradition. Incised and relief decoration are also applied on some vessels in small quantities. Incised parallel lines, curvy lines, dots, geometric motifs such as circles and triangles, and relief braids, especially on pithoi, are the most common decorative elements in the Urartian pottery tradition. Some pots have painted decoration,[4] including lines and geometric motifs. Examination of decorated pots suggests that in most cases this is a continuation of the earlier traditions of previous cultures.

I shall evaluate the Urartian pottery traditions as a whole and not make any chronological distinctions about the pottery itself. Thus, the division of pottery in this chapter is based completely on differentiations of wares and forms rather than chronological distinctions. I have categorised the pottery within the 'Appearance of New Traditions', 'Continuation of Earlier Traditions' and 'Uncharacteristic Traditions'.

Appearance of new traditions

Urartians experienced technological development in pottery production as well as other subjects by the Middle Iron Age. Although no direct evidence for workshops in Urartu has been found to date, the existence of fast wheel and pot

[3] Only the results of recent excavations can be applied to the categorisation of Urartian pottery, since the vast majority of the early excavations draw attention solely to the red polished palace wares and pithoi.

[4] Imported painted pottery is not considered.

marks for the first time implies mass production and a specialisation on pottery production.[5] The large number of vessels in the storage rooms of fortresses are further testimony to mass production, probably as a result of state involvement. Additionally, high quality pottery traditions in finer shapes and an increasing repertory of forms are noticeable in the Urartian period compared with earlier. Changes in pottery technology reveal themselves especially in serving and storage pots for use by the elites, unlike cooking pots for daily usage.

Three distinctive ware groups can be separated from earlier traditions and these are only represented within the Urartian state: red polished pottery, grit-tempered buff slipped pottery and brown burnished thin pottery.

Wares

Red Polished Pottery

Red polished pottery is one of the most characteristic pottery traditions in the Urartian period (Fig. 1). The popularity of this assemblage goes back to the early years of Urartian studies when scholars drew attention to its shiny red colour. Previously, it was called as 'Toprakkale Ware' by C.A. Burney due to its abundance in the Toprakkale excavations.[6] Afterwards, he used the more widely known term of 'Red Polished Ware'[7] because of its distinctive colour and surface treatment. When excavations began in Tushpa (capital of Urartian state in Van province), the term 'Vannic Sherds' was preferred for this pottery by M.T. Tarhan and V. Sevin, who would later, however, generally use the term 'Bianili Ceramics'.[8] Additionally, the term 'Palastware' has also been used by S. Kroll based on his studies in north-western Iran.[9] Although many terms were applied to this pottery tradition, in appearance it is quite homogenous. This homogeneity is probably related to a number of workshops under the central authority throughout the Urartian lands. Indeed, the presence of multiple central workshops has also been suggested by neutron activation analysis on red polished pottery from various centres.[10]

[5] Erdem and Konyar 2011.
[6] Burney 1957, 42.
[7] Burney and Lang 1971, 129.
[8] Tarhan and Sevin 1991, 432; 1977, 292.
[9] Kroll 1976, 9.
[10] Speakman *et al*. 2004, 119, 126.

Fig. 1. Red polished pottery from Ayanis Fortress
(after Çilingiroğlu 1997, res. 82–83; Ayanis excavation archive).

Red polished Urartian ware is not only distinctive with its polished red colour, but also its clay features and forms which make this ware group a hallmark of the Urartian period. Red polished pottery had not been attested before[11] or possibly after the Urartian state.[12] Although the red slipped pottery tradition goes back to the Early Iron Age, it differs from Middle Iron Age production

[11] von der Osten (1952, 314) has stated the similarity between Hittite and Urartian pottery although this is no longer accepted.

[12] It has been suggested recently that red polished pottery of lesser quality continued during the post-Urartian period (Kroll 2014, 205; Kalkan 2011).

by its unburnished surfaces. Some of the red vessels in the Early/Middle Iron Age cemeteries in Karagündüz, Dilkaya and Yoncatepe reflect a different tradition, with unburnished and/or slightly burnished surfaces and a slipping technique where the brush marks for slipping are visible on the surface.[13] Therefore, there remains little doubt that classical red polished pottery was produced only during the Urartian period. Urartian potters were successful in producing red polished pottery, particularly in burnishing and slipping to make the pots attractive. Based on both the highly polished surface and finer forms, red polished wares have been by some scholars interpreted as an attempt to imitate the appearance of metallic vessels.[14] This is comprehensible when the very thin walls of the vessels, particularly jugs with one handle and goblets, and their shiny surface are considered.

The fabric of the pottery was prepared mostly by using very fine clay without any inclusions, although sometimes it contains a little sand. Nearly all red burnished pottery is well fired and wheel-made. There are also some examples in medium quality clay with sand and grit inclusions, especially for larger vessels. The colour of the clay ranged from light brown, grey, greyish-black to red. The thick layer of slip and high burnishing provide a glaze-like appearance. The slip was applied over the clay before firing. C.F. Lehmann-Haupt suggested that the slip was made of crushed vessels dissolved in water because the walls of the vessels are not burned red to the same degree as the slip.[15] A more plausible suggestion, made by M.N. van Loon, is that the slip composed of a solution in water of the clay which formed an isolating layer over the surface of the vessels in the firing and thus prevented the heat from decarbonising the walls of the vessels.[16] This seems a more plausible suggestion for the slip technique of red polished pottery. The slip colour, however, ranges through all tones of red and maroon. Mottled surfaces with brown and grey are also seen. Chemical and micro-morphological analyses indicate an intensive iron content in the clay of red polished pottery.[17] Therefore the red colour was obtained by the addition of a high percentage of iron into the paste and firing the vessels in an oxidising atmosphere.[18]

[13] This pottery is discussed below under ‘Continuation of Earlier Traditions’.
[14] van Loon 1966, 32; Emre 1969, 289.
[15] Lehmann-Haupt 1931, 577.
[16] van Loon 1966, 32.
[17] Akça *et al*. 2009, 240, 243.
[18] van Loon 1966, 32. Recent research on Urartian pottery technology using ethno-archaeological and experimental methods has been carried out by A. Batmaz. For detail information, see Batmaz 2016; 2018; Batmaz and Özkan 2017.

The application of burnishing can be divided into high and low quality. The clay of the latter is coarser than for the aforementioned group with sand and grit inclusions.[19] The quantity is less than that of high quality ware. The Ayanis excavations show that low quality red burnished pottery was used both in the outer town and the citadel.[20]

Red polished pottery was extensively used by the Urartian elites as the finds from fortresses have shown.[21] Why Urartians had a preference for red pottery is not yet clear. There is a suggestion that the colour red had a spiritual meaning as a symbol of the god Haldi, but there is no consensus.[22] Distribution of red polished pottery in the Ayanis Fortress while only a few sherds of it have been found in the temple area seems to undercut any spiritual connection. Whatever its meaning, it is clear that Urartians frequently used the colour red both in pottery and in clothing (as may be seen on wall-paintings).

Grit-Tempered Buff Slipped Pottery

Production of light coloured pottery in the Urartian heartland became evident in the Early Iron Age with the appearance of buff and pinkish-brown slipped pottery which is mostly grooved under the rim.[23] However, grit-tempered buff slipped pottery differs from those mentioned from the point of quality and clay inclusion (Fig. 2): grit-tempered buff pottery is usually wheel made and well fired, whereas Early Iron Age pink/buff ware is generally handmade or finished on a slow wheel, so that the former is better in shape. Furthermore, Early Iron Age pink/buff pottery is sometimes coarser than grit-tempered buff slipped pottery with its lime, mica and chaff inclusions. Grit-tempered buff slipped pottery is remarkable for its abundant black and rounded grit temper.

The clay is usually buff but sometimes brown or light brown in colour and slipped with buff, yellowish-buff and pinkish-buff. The slip is always present and mostly similar in colour to paste. The surface of the vessels is generally slightly burnished or well smoothed. Jars with elongated body were the major preferred form.

[19] This group was named ‘Fake Urartian Red Polished Ware’ by Kozbe *et al.* 2001, 90.

[20] Kozbe *et al.* 2001, 90; Stone and Zimansky 2004, 239.

[21] Red polished pottery has been found in the fortresses of Ayanis (Kozbe *et al.* 2001, 90), Van Kalesi (Tarhan and Sevin 1990, 357), Toprakkale (Erzen *et al.* 1961, 15), Adilcevaz Kef Kalesi (Öğün and Bilgiç 1967, 40), Çavuştepe (Erzen *et al.* 1962, 32; Erzen 1978, 40), Altıntepe (Emre 1969, 281–84), Kayalıdere (Burney 1966, 85), Karmir-Blur (Piotrovsky 1952, 33–34; 1970, 37, fig. 15), Bastam (Kroll 1979, 203; 1988, Abb. 1/1-2) and Arin-Berd (Piotrovsky 1950, 35).

[22] Ter-Martirosov 2009, 135.

[23] Köroğlu and Konyar 2005; Erdem 2012.

Fig. 2. Grit tempered buff slipped pottery from Ayanis Fortress (after Çilingiroğlu 1997, res. 86; Ayanis excavation archive).

Brown Burnished Thin Pottery

Brown-surfaced pottery is not characteristic of any particular pottery tradition, unless some specific feature of it allows dating. It is the most commonly seen ware group for almost all cultures as in Urartu. Archaeological results from the Ayanis Fortress indicate that brown-surfaced pottery formed the vast majority of the Urartian pottery assemblage. However, a group with very thin walls and well-burnished surface treatment, as observed in red polished ware, is distinct from the rest of the brown surface pottery, which is not known in the Urartian lands before the time of the Urartian state. It is almost the same as the red polished pottery in terms of clay inclusion, burnishing and form, except for its brown and reddish-brown colour. Most of the new forms seen in red polished pottery, such as jugs, goblets and dinoi, were also made in brown burnished tradition in very high quality.

Forms

One of the most remarkable changes in pottery technology in Urartian culture is the increased repertory. These are particularly distinct in serving and storage pots made mostly for the elites. Many of the vessels are of forms previously unknown in the Urartian lands. There is, as yet, no clarity about their place of origin and I shall not discuss it here.

It needs to be emphasised that the new forms of the Urartian period were not produced exclusively in the new ware traditions, but also in earlier ones, such as the pink/buff slipped or cream slipped wares which will be mentioned below. New forms can be listed as:

> Trefoil jugs (Fig. 3), footed goblets (Fig. 4), fruit-stands (Fig. 5), plates (Fig. 6), a dinos (Fig. 7), sharply carinated bowls (Fig. 8), wide-mouthed open bowls (Fig. 9), small bowls with button base (Fig. 10), jars with elongated body (Fig. 11), large jars with thickened rim externally (Fig. 12), pithoi (Fig. 13), lengers[24] (Fig. 14), wide-mouthed large vessels[25] (Fig. 15).

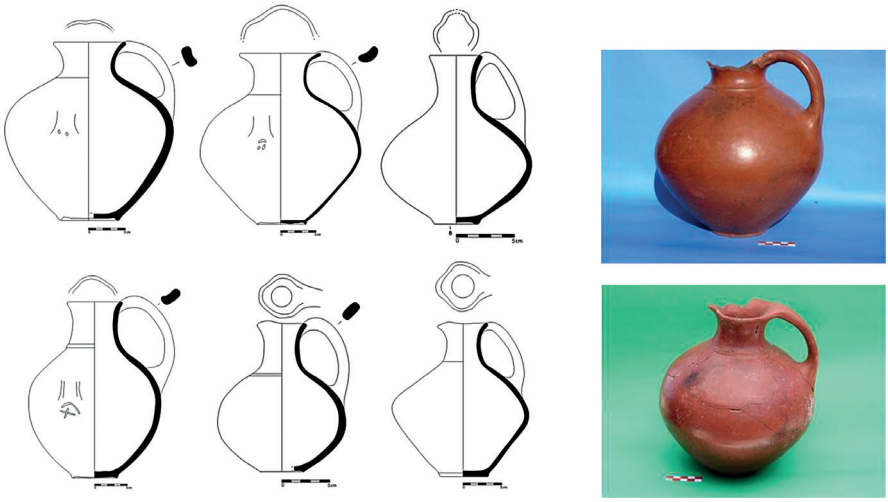

Fig. 3. Trefoil jugs from Ayanis Fortress (Ayanis excavation archive).

[24] Although this type of large dish is known in the Early Bronze Age, the fabric and forms differ from Urartian ones.

[25] For parallels to these forms, see Sivas 1998, lev. 1–120; Kozbe *et al*. 2001, 132–52; Kroll 1976, 111–47; 1979, 205–16.

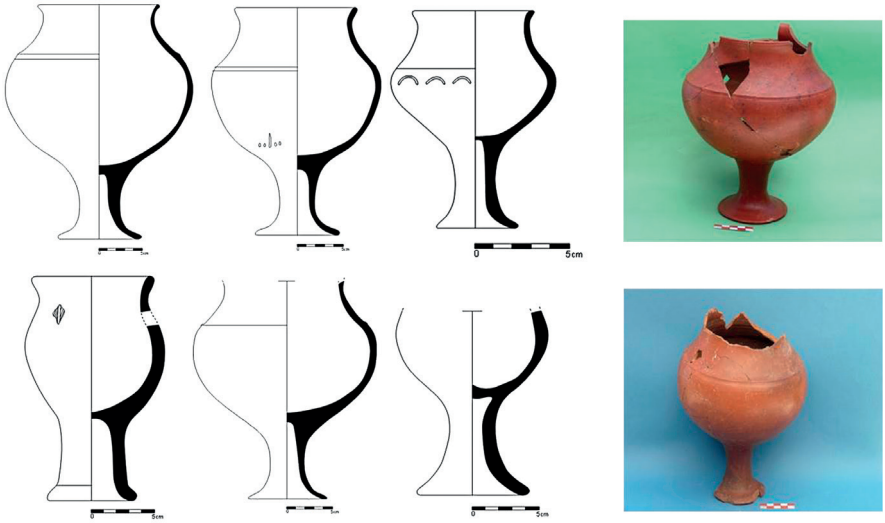

Fig. 4. Footed goblets from Ayanis Fortress (Ayanis excavation archive).

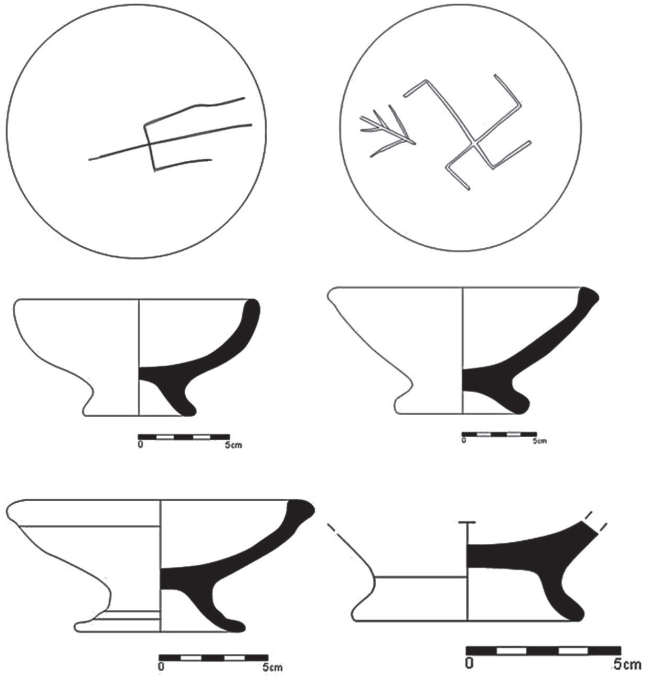

Fig. 5. Fruit stands from Ayanis Fortress (Ayanis excavation archive).

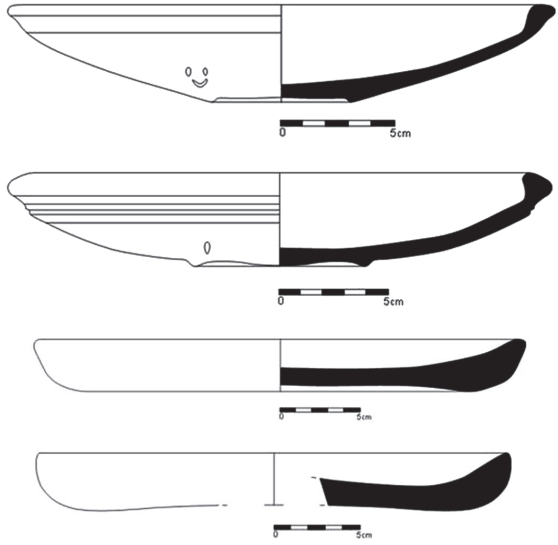

Fig. 6. Plates from Ayanis Fortress
(Ayanis excavation archive).

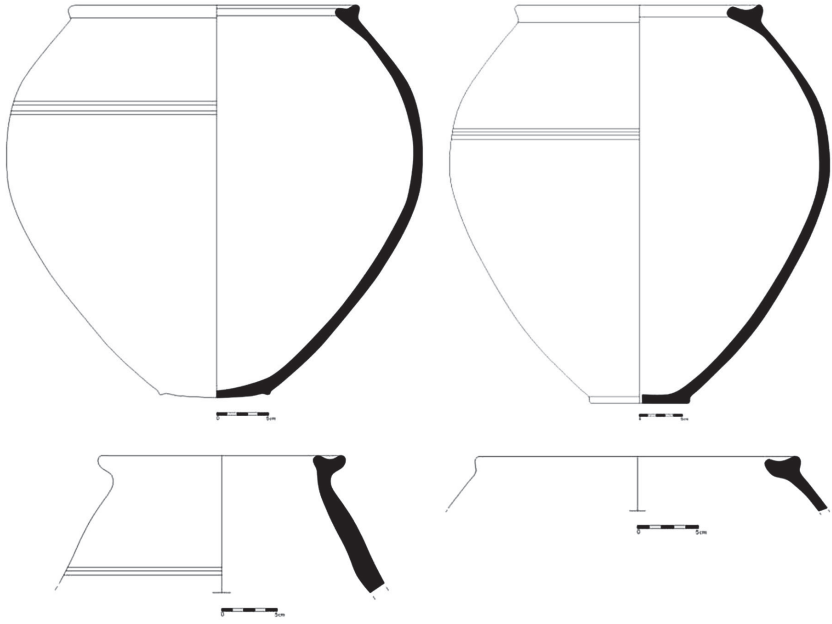

Fig. 7. Dinos from Ayanis Fortress (after Erdem 2011, fig. 6i–j).

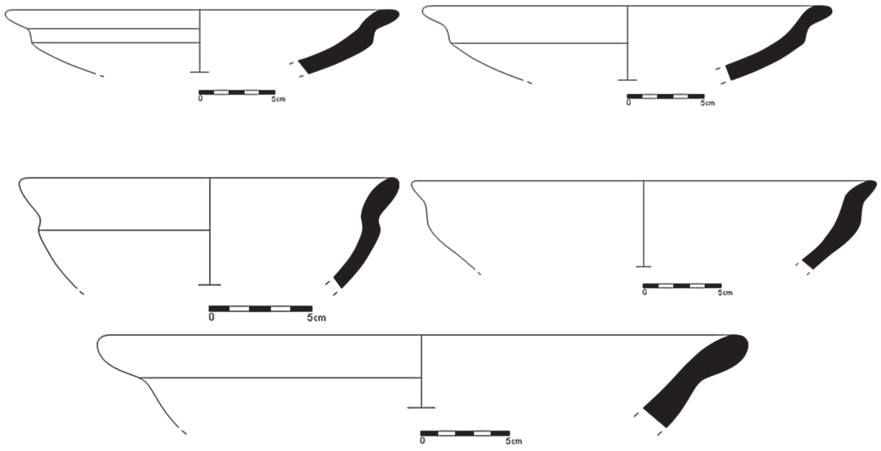

Fig. 8. Sharply carinated bowls from Ayanis Fortress (Ayanis excavation archive).

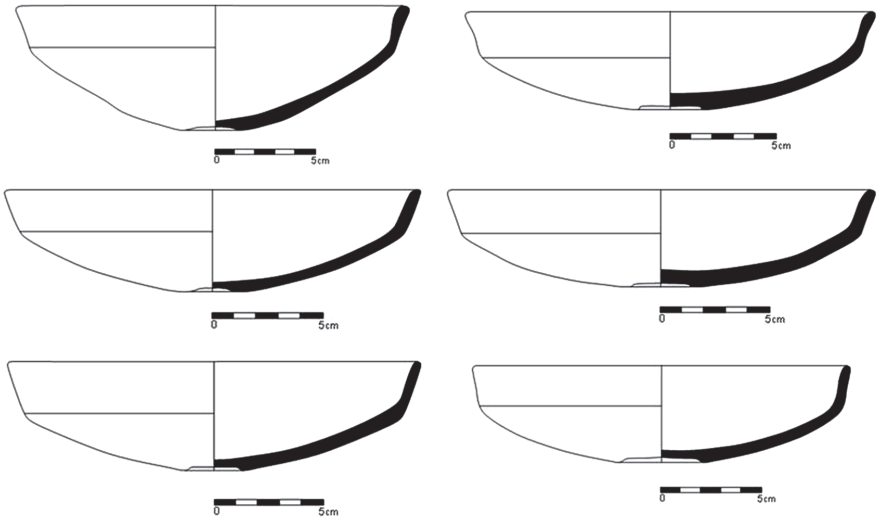

Fig. 9. Wide-mouthed open bowls from Ayanis Fortress (Ayanis excavation archive).

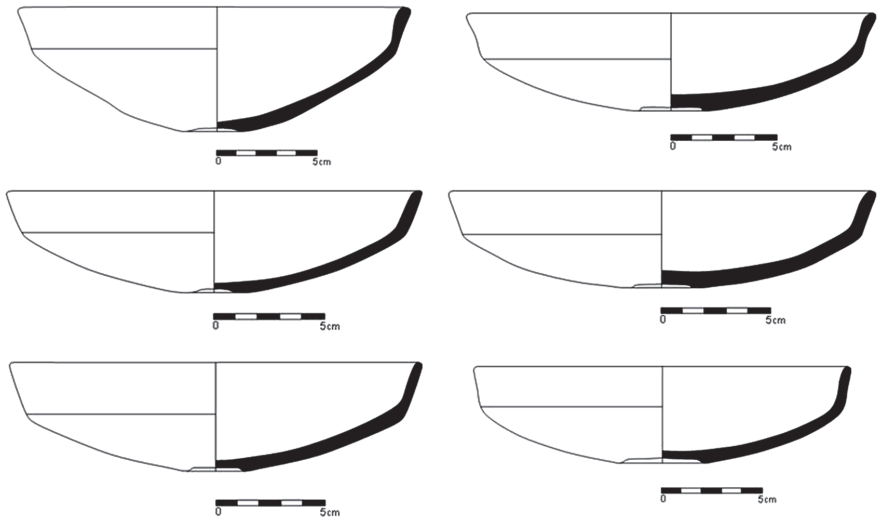

Fig. 10. Small bowls with button base from Ayanis Fortress (Ayanis excavation archive).

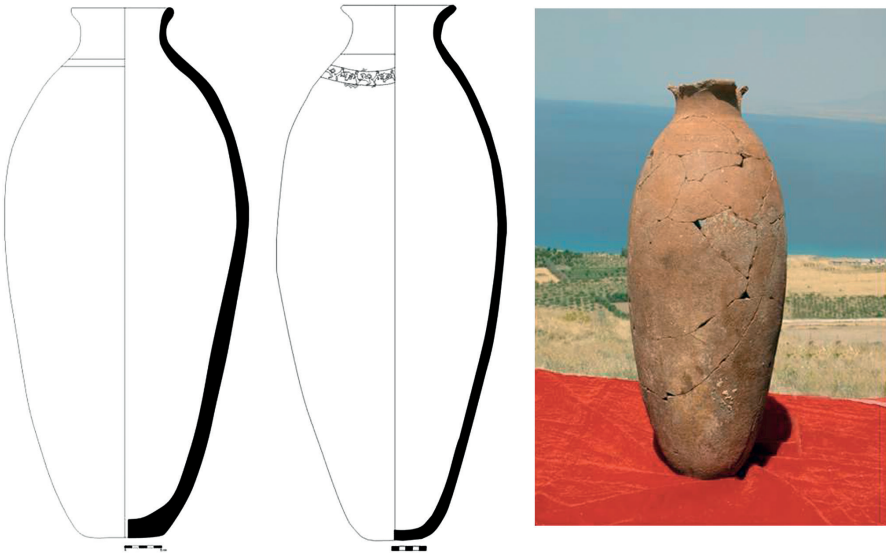

Fig. 11. Jars with elongated body from Ayanis Fortress (after Erdem 2013, pl. 11).

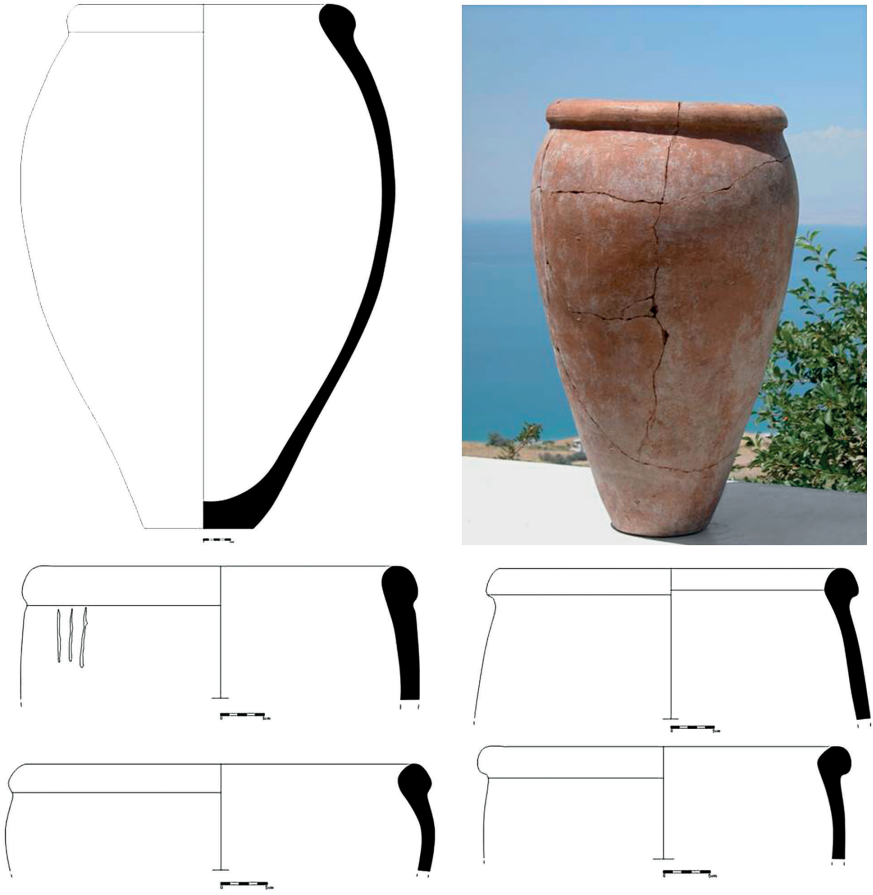

Fig. 12. Large jars with externally thickened rim from Ayanis Fortress (after Erdem 2011, fig. 2d).

Jars with a hole in the base, vessels with ring bases, vessels with incised ring bases, vessels with horizontal loop handle and ring stands are other new elements for the pottery types used during the Urartian period.

The forms listed above mostly served the elite, based on the plenitude of finds in state buildings. They were also found stored in the basement rooms of fortresses, which is a result of mass production. Therefore, they must have been produced under state control, which is also supported by the existence of pot marks, mainly present on the new forms.[26] The development of such new

[26] For detail information about pot marks, see Derin 1999; Erdem 2013.

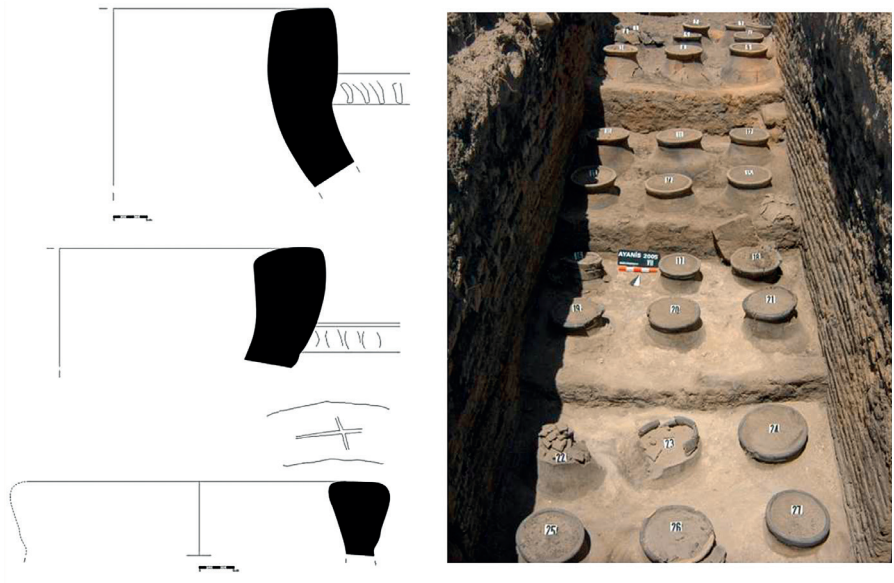

Fig. 13. Pithoi from Ayanis Fortress (Ayanis excavation archive).

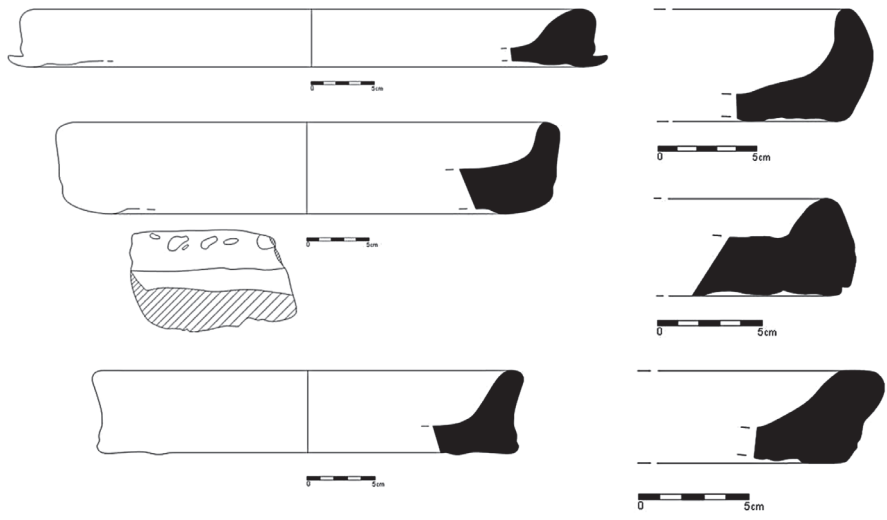

Fig. 14. Lengers from Ayanis Fortress
(Ayanis excavation archive).

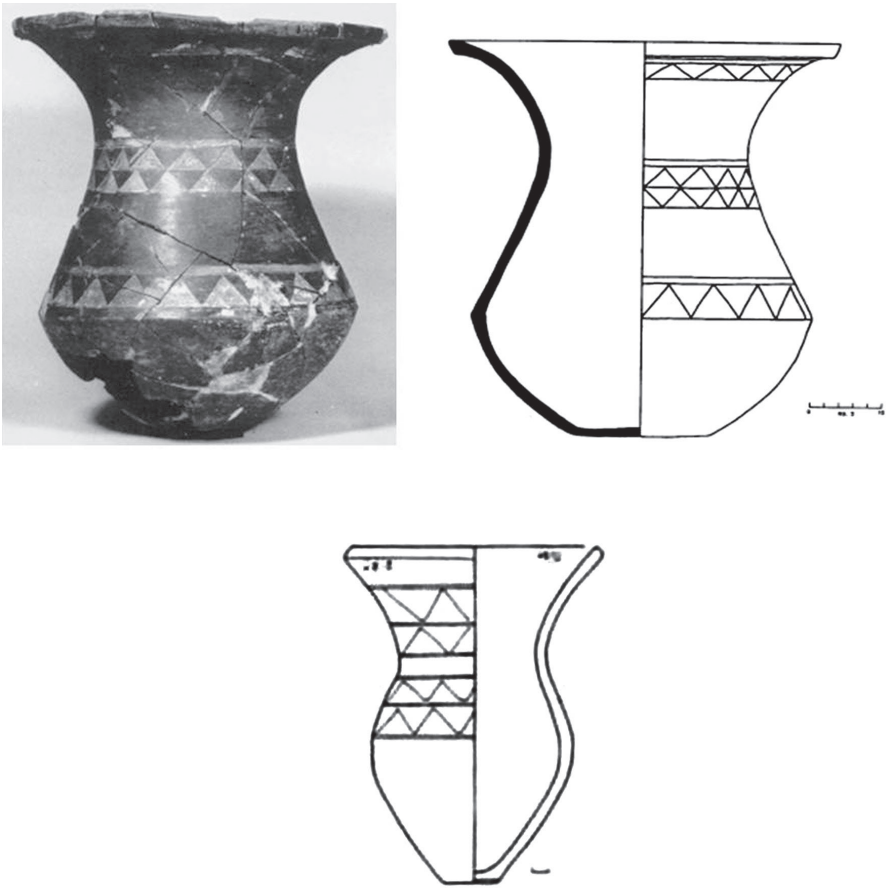

Fig. 15. Wide-mouthed large vessels from Agrab Tepe and Ayanis Fortress (after Muscarella 1973, fig. 24).

forms as serving- and storage vessels is not surprising for a state where intensive storage and serving facilities were undertaken. The advanced storage activities in Urartian fortresses has been demonstrated by the excavation of a number of storage rooms. Excavations in Karmir-Blur and Ayanis indicate that these rooms were used for the storage of both foodstuffs and vessels themselves that they produced to satisfy the demand of the fortresses.[27]

[27] Baştürk 2012.

Considering all of this, one of the most important reasons for the appearance of new vessel forms by the Urartian state must be related to the changes in production and consumption patterns. The state was established by a confederation of semi-nomadic tribes largely engaged in animal husbandry. Following from the establishment of the state came improvements to agricultural subsistence besides animal husbandry. This radical changes in the Urartian lands led to the creation of new vessel forms as listed above. For instance, large-sized vessels such as pithoi or storage jars, which were not found in previous periods, are a result of a sedentary lifestyle, related to storage activities. Accordingly, the first appearance of the 'jars with a hole in the bottom', which, on the basis of ethnographic studies, are thought to be related to cheese-making,[28] also indicate changes in production patterns in the Urartian state. Furthermore, the appearance of plates for the first time can be explained by increased consumption of dry meat such as the *kebap*, the most preferred food in present eastern Turkey; and the existence of serving pots such as jugs and goblets should be related to the consumption of wine and/or beer (according to the archaeological remains from Karmir-Blur and Ayanis).[29] Therefore, the effects of production and consumption patterns on the development of new vessel forms are undeniable when all of the archaeological results are taken into consideration. And, of course, the efforts of the elite to differentiate themselves from the generality of the public are also far from negligible in the creation of new pottery traditions.

Continuation of earlier traditions

The Urartian lands included many different cultures and pottery traditions from the Neolithic and Chalcolithic eras to the Middle Iron Age/Urartian period. For instance, black burnished wares in the Early Bronze Age, a painted pottery tradition in the Middle Bronze Age, and pink/buff grooved ware in the Early Iron Age are the most characteristic ones. However, with the establishment of the Urartian state, different pottery traditions appear both in production technology and forms (as mentioned above). Although changes in pottery technology in Urartian culture are assumed to be evolutionary, the entire process was not entirely independent from previous cultures and still had some scant connections with earlier pottery traditions. These traditions were not completely destroyed by the establishment of the Urartian state and some, especially from the Early Iron Age, survived within

[28] Çevik and Erdem 2015.
[29] Piotrovsky 1967, 13; Erdem and Çilingiroğlu 2010, 3.

the newly established state traditions. This is shown by the continuation of earlier wares and forms into the Urartian period: they are found mostly in the mounds but also in fortresses and citadels in low ratio. These earlier traditions can be accepted as the continuation of local traits within the Urartian state. It should be noted that wares from the earlier traditions might be used not just for earlier forms but for forms which had newly appeared with the establishment of the state.

Wares

Pink/Buff Slipped Pottery

It is known that the light surface monochrome pottery tradition in the Urartian heartland appeared first in the Early Iron Age. Pinkish light brown, buff, pinkish-buff and yellowish-buff wares are dominant in the Early Iron Age Urartian lands besides of other pottery traditions.

Pink/buff slipped pottery is usually seen in the forms of carinated and simple bowls and small jars. Since most of the vessels bear horizontal grooves under the rim, this ware group is represented mainly by 'grooved pottery', a term widely used by scholars for the Early Iron Age pottery tradition in eastern Turkey[30] (Fig. 16). Archaeological excavations in Norşuntepe, Korucutepe, Karagündüz, Dilkaya, Gricano, Salattepe and many other sites in eastern and south-eastern Turkey have made clear that grooved pottery emerged in the Early Iron Age, just prior to the Urartian state.[31] The Elazığ-Malatya region is the area with most widespread grooved pottery.[32] However, continuation of grooved pottery into the Urartian period is clear archaeologically from excavations such as Ayanis, Yoncatepe, Anzaf and Van fortresses.[33] Although pink/buff slipped pottery is mostly seen in the form of grooved pottery, grooved pottery in general was not only produced as pink/buff slipped ware but also as unburnished red slipped, black burnished and cream slipped wares according to regional diversity.[34] It was also adapted later to red polished pottery by the Urartians (which is not considered within the 'grooved pottery' tradition).

[30] Hauptmann 1976; Russell 1980, 35–36; Sevin 1988; Çilingiroğlu 1993, 476; Köroğlu and Konyar 2005; Roaf and Schachner 2005; Müller 2005.

[31] For detailed information about dating and the chronology problems of grooved pottery, see Köroğlu and Konyar 2005; Erdem 2012.

[32] Hauptmann 1970, 105.

[33] For detailed information, see Erdem 2009a.

[34] Erdem 2012.

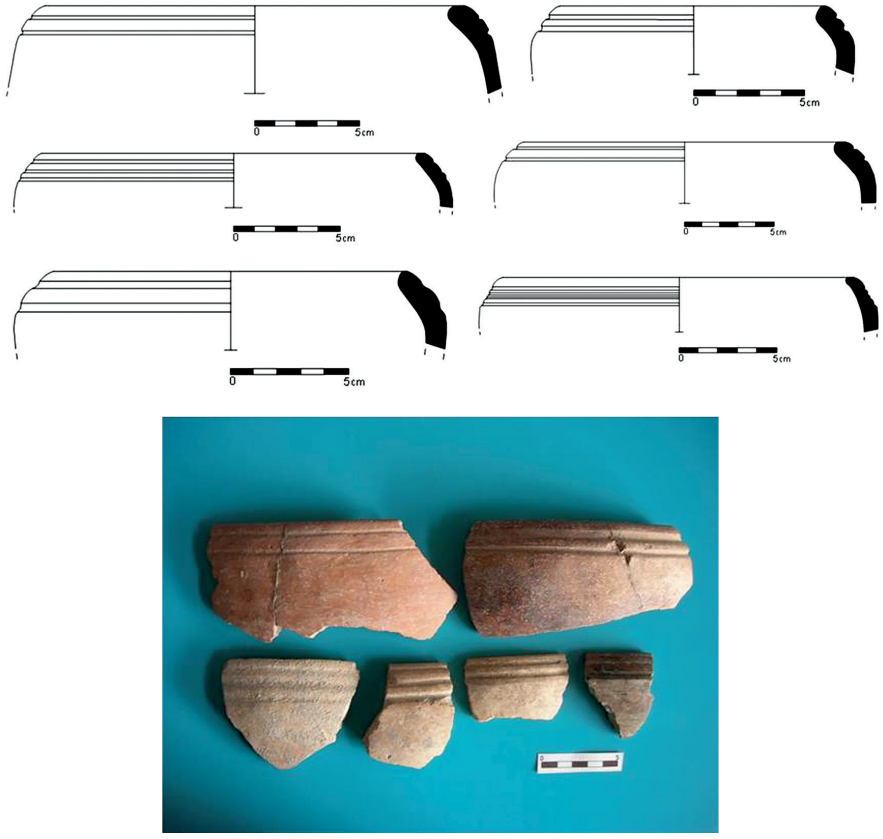

Fig. 16. Grooved pottery from Ayanis Fortress (after Erdem 2009a, figs. 3–4).

The fabric of pink/buff slipped pottery was usually prepared using a fine and/or medium clay with sand, grit and sometimes mica and lime inclusion. Nearly all of the pottery is well or medium fired. There are also some examples in coarser quality with chaff inclusions, especially in larger vessels. The colour of the clay varies between pinkish light brown, buff, pinkish-buff and yellowish-buff. Most vessels have slip applied, similar in colour to paste; there are some examples without slipping. The surfaces are generally slightly burnished or well smoothed.

Examination of pink/buff slipped pottery reveals the same clay features as Early Iron Age 'grooved pottery'. This might be explained as the continuation of the Early Iron Age pink/buff slipped pottery tradition into the Urartian period. However, the Urartians did not use this ware only for producing earlier Early Iron Age forms such as grooved pottery, carinated and simple bowls, but also new forms such as goblets, fruit stands and cups which were developed in the heartland during the Urartian period.

Cream Slipped Pottery

Cream slipped pottery is another tradition going back to the Early Iron Age (Fig. 17). It is known from the Elazığ-Malatya and Van regions. Urartians continued to produce this ware, though not widely. Cream slipped pottery forms only a small proportion of the Urartian pottery assemblage recovered by archaeological activity.[35]

The colour of the clay is usually buff and light brown and the clay was slipped with cream colour. The surface of the vessels is generally well smoothed without any burnishing, although there are rare instances of slight burnishing. This pottery tradition was used largely for simple bowls and large jars.

Fig. 17. Cream slipped pottery from Ayanis Fortress (Ayanis excavation archive).

Unburnished Red Slipped Pottery

As mentioned above, production of red colour pottery dates back to the Early Iron Age, based on archaeological data from the Urartian heartland. Some of the vessels from Karagündüz, Dilkaya and Yoncatepe cemeteries differ from Urartian red polished pottery in terms of slipping technique and burnishing, as mentioned above. The clay of this group is usually fine and/or of medium quality with sand, grit and sometimes lime inclusions. It is generally well or medium fired. The colour of the clay varies between brown, light brown and

[35] It covers only 2% of the whole pottery assemblage in the Ayanis excavation.

pinkish-brown. The surface of the vessels was slipped in red, dark red and maroon. One of the most remarkable features of this group is the technique of slipping: the lines of the brushing are visible on the surface of the pottery. Accordingly, the vessels do not have any burnishing application in contrast to red polished pottery (Fig. 18).

When all of the evidence about red slipped pottery is taken into consideration, there are some questions still unanswered. It remains uncertain whether unburnished red slipped pottery was produced by the Urartians in the Middle Iron Age or was produced in the Early Iron Age but survived into the Middle Iron Age, though rarely seen in the Urartian period. There is, however, no doubt about the pioneering role of the red polished pottery tradition in the Urartian period.

Fig. 18. Unburnished red slipped vessels from Karagündüz and a fragment from Ayanis Fortress (after Erdem 2009b, pl. XCVIII, C).

Grey and Black Burnished Pottery

Grey and black burnished pottery was usually made from medium clay with sand, grit, mica and sometimes lime and chaff inclusions. It was generally well or medium fired and well burnished (Fig. 19). This group differs from those without burnishing, which are usually used as kitchen pots. In fact, most vessels in the latter group had a smoked surface of black and dark grey although the vessels are in brown colour; and they are coarser than grey and black burnished pottery with their intensive inclusions. Therefore kitchen wares are considered under the category of 'Coarse Pottery' below.

Grey and black burnished pottery is known from the earlier periods (Chalcolithic and Early Bronze Age) in the Urartian lands and it is not a distinguishing tradition of Urartian culture: it exists in small quantities, especially in the heartland. Archaeological data from the Lake Van basin and also in Elazığ-Malatya region indicate that this pottery tradition was not much favoured in the Urartian period. The sharp decrease in this tradition in the heartland is noticeable when Urartian excavations are considered both in mounds and in fortresses such as Ayanis and Toprakkale:[36] for example, it represents only a couple of sherds in the Ayanis pottery repertory. However, it was widely used in Transcaucasia and also north-eastern Turkey, where a large quantity of grey and black burnished pottery was unearthed in Urartian-period contexts.[37]

Fig. 19. Grey and black burnished pottery from Ayanis Fortress (Ayanis excavation archive).

[36] van Loon 1966, 34.
[37] Hmayakyan 2002, 286; Ter-Martirosov 2009, 127.

Although north-eastern Turkey is very close to the Lake Van basin, it generally represents a cultural homogeneity with Transcaucasia. Therefore, the grey and black burnished pottery tradition in Transcaucasia and north-eastern Turkey can be explained by the conservative traits of these regions from the Chalcolithic to the Iron Age.[38]

Forms

The social and economic structure of the Early Iron Age in the Urartian lands was based extensively on a rural lifestyle. The semi-nomadic tribes mainly engaged in animal husbandry and, unlike the Urartian ruling class, the leaders of these tribes were not sharply differentiated from their people in terms of lifestyle, which is observable in both the pottery tradition and other archaeological evidence. Therefore the form repertory of the Early Iron Age is not very rich and mostly related to the nomadic lifestyle. For example, there are no huge storage vessels (signs of a sedentary life) or serving vessels like goblets or fruit stands (reflecting the privilege of the elite). Instead, simple forms such as bowls and small jars with multiple purposes were largely preferred. Of course, product range is another important determiner of form repertory in the Early Iron Age. Nutrition derived mainly from animal products, and provision of agricultural foodstuffs such as fruit and vegetables was not as easy as in the Urartian period. Consumption of agricultural products was much slighter than of animal products. Thus, the absence of fruit stands, goblets or plates is hardly a surprise. It seems that the Early Iron Age people in eastern Turkey used very limited forms for any kind of activity related to production, storage and consumption. Though the jars with a hole in bottom used for cheese production are related to animal products, their absence in Early Iron Age contexts indicates that a different production technique was used for cheese-making before the Urartian period.

Considering all of these, since form repertory is not very rich in the Early Iron Age, the earlier forms in the Urartian period consist of very limited forms such as grooved bowls (Fig. 16), carinated bowls (Fig. 20), simple bowls (Fig. 21) and small jars with a globular body[39] (Fig. 22).

[38] Işıklı and Erdem 2009.

[39] For parallels to these forms, see Sivas 1998, lev. 1–120; Kozbe *et al*. 2001, 132–52; Kroll 1976, 111–47; 1979, 205–16.

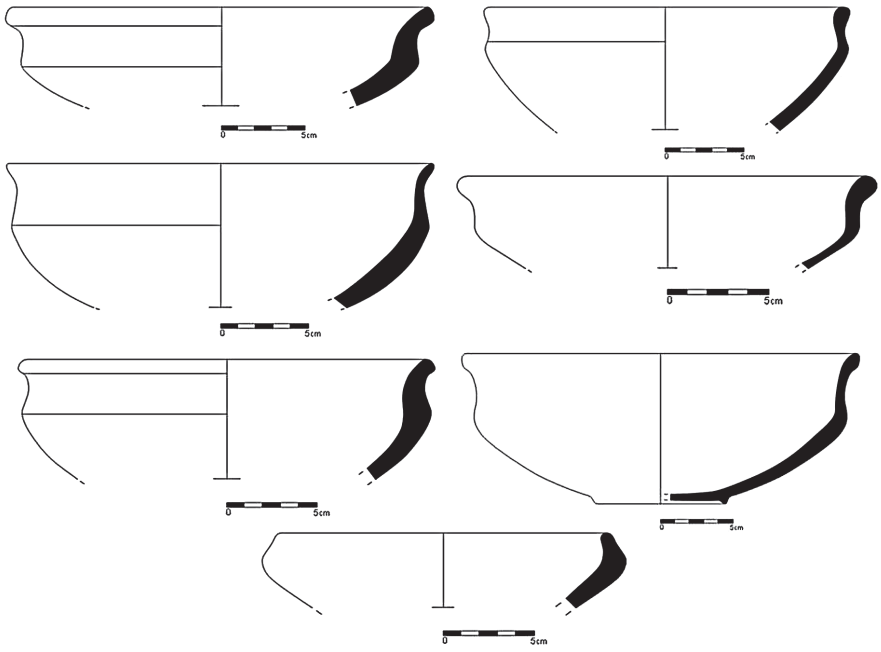

Fig. 20. Carinated bowls from Ayanis Fortress (Ayanis excavation archive).

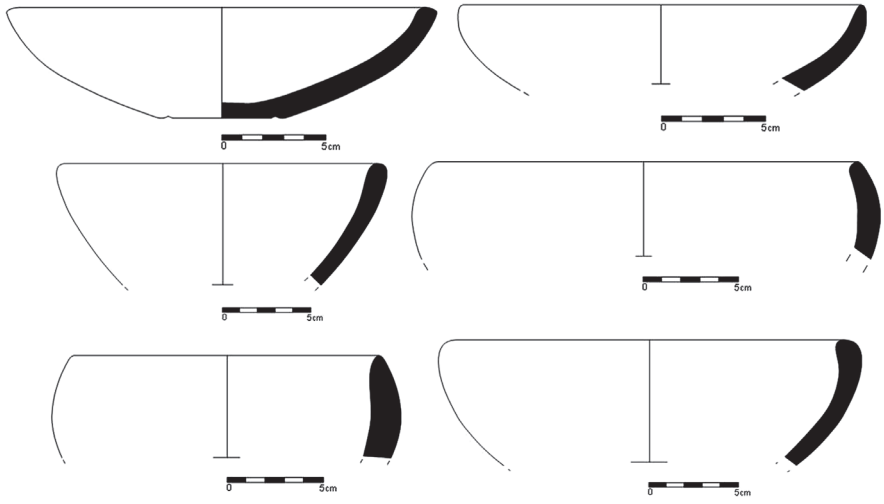

Fig. 21. Simple bowls from Ayanis Fortress (Ayanis excavation archive).

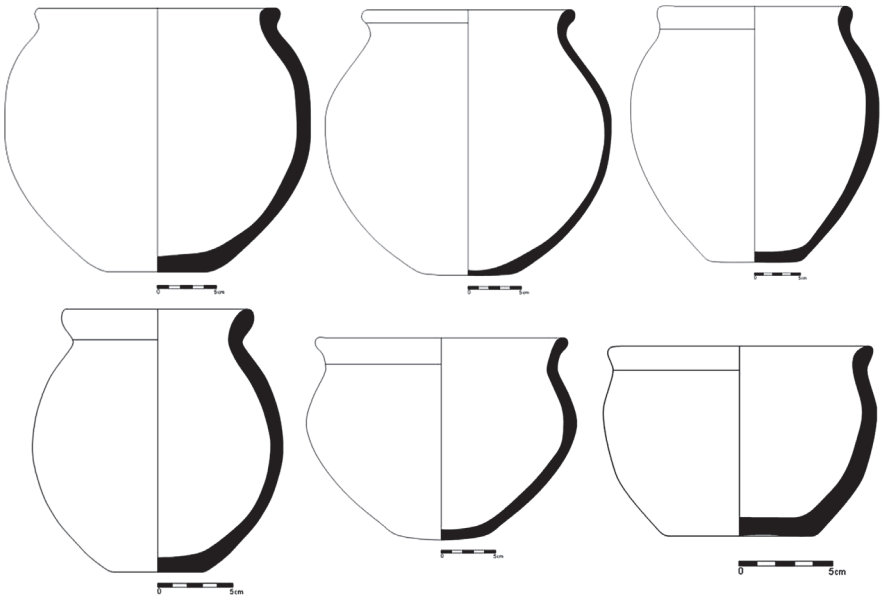

Fig. 22. Small jars with globular bodies from Ayanis Fortress (Ayanis excavation archive).

Uncharacteristic traditions

Some pottery traditions are not signifiers of a particular period or culture, unless they bear some particular features related to either: they have too long a period of use. For instance, coarse kitchen wares or brown wares can be produced in different cultures from the Neolithic down to modern times. Accordingly, brown slipped and coarse pottery are not a distinct or distinguishing feature of the Urartian pottery assemblage. There is nothing to give rise to an Urartian attribution. What makes these ware groups Urartian is only the vessel forms. Put another way, ware tradition alone is not a sufficient characteristic without knowledge of vessel forms. Therefore the pottery traditions mentioned are only determinative when they are produced in the Urartian forms.

Wares

Brown Slipped Pottery

Brown slipped pottery is the most common ware group for almost all cultures, as in Urartu. It is not characteristic for Urartu, since the clay inclusions do not differ from previous or following cultures – and variation in clay inclusions is generally related to regional preference rather than chronological separation. Only the production technology makes brown slipped pottery Urartian, with vessel forms and use of a fast wheel.

Brown slipped pottery is usually prepared using medium clay with sand and grit inclusions. Sometimes mica and lime inclusions are also added to clay – besides coarser ones with chaff inclusion, mostly in larger vessels. The colour of the clay varies between light and dark brown. Most vessels have slip applied, similar in colour to paste; though there are some coarser examples without slip. The surface of the vessels generally is medium or slightly burnished. Some have mottled surfaces because of firing. Brown slipped pottery covers a wide range of forms from small bowls to large storage jars.

It should be noted that this ware group covers a large repertory of forms, including both early and new vessel forms, which separates it from limited uncharacteristic forms such as small jars with a globular body and simple bowls.

Coarse Pottery

Coarse pottery is usually light or dark brown, grey or greyish-black. The clay generally contains large amounts of mica and chaff inclusions besides grit temper. It is usually low fired and has a mottled surface. Furthermore, most of the kitchen vessels have a smoked surface (grey, grey-black), which gives a false impression about the underlying colour of the vessels. As to the form repertory, small jars with globular body and lengers (large deep dishes) – new vessel forms[40] – were widely preferred forms in this ware group.

[40] This form was mentioned above under ‘Appearance of New Traditions’.

Forms

Some of the simple vessel forms can be seen in any culture, past or present. Use of this kind of simple form varies from region to region. Therefore some of the kitchen pots in Urartu do not bear a characteristic feature of Urartu which leaves us to categorise them under 'Uncharacteristic Traditions'. Vessels such as small simple jars and simple bowls are not a source of data for dating Urartian culture.

Decorated pottery

Although Urartian pottery consists mainly of monochrome pottery, decorated pottery also existed in very small amount. Decorated pottery is known from earlier periods in the Urartian lands: both incised and painted vessels especially are known in the Middle–Late Bronze and Early Iron Ages. After the establishment of the Urartian state, such vessels are rarely placed in the Urartian pottery assemblage. Painted decoration, where it occurs, is usually monochrome painted with red, which appears for the first time in the Early Iron Age.[41] The application of red/maroon paint on light surface bowls, which is represented by only a couple of sherds during Urartian period, consists mainly of geometric motifs such as vertical and horizontal bands, curvy lines and triangles. These are generally placed under the rim. Incised decoration seems to be a continuation of 2nd-millennium traditions; again, it consists of geometric motifs such as horizontal and vertical lines, triangles, dots and curvy lines. Both painted and incised decoration dating back to the 2nd millennium BC are represented by a couple of examples in the Urartian period.

Pattern burnishing is another decorative style that existed in the Urartian period. Although black pottery with pattern burnishing goes back to the Middle and Late Bronze Ages, its application to red pottery is known in the Early Iron Age just before the formation of the Urartian state, especially in the heartland. Both black and red traditions with pattern burnishing survived in Urartu, though scarce.[42]

Besides painted and incised decoration, impress and stamp decoration was used in the Urartian period for the first time. Impressed rosettes, palmettes and cuneiform inscriptions were used as decorative elements (Fig. 23). Furthermore, a jar from the Ayanis Fortress indicates that cylinder seals were sometimes used for the decoration of vessels (Fig. 24).

[41] Belli and Kavaklı 1999, 439; Karabacak 2001, lev. 16, 20; Belli and Konyar 2003, çizim 53, res. 37.

[42] van Loon 1966, 35.

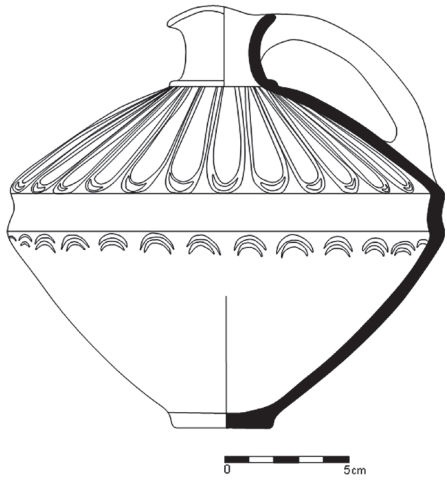

Fig. 23. Trefoil jug from Van Fortress mound (after Sevin 1994, fig. 213).

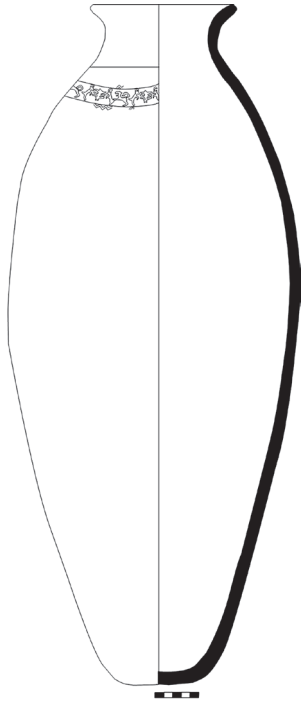

Fig. 24. Vessel decorated with a cylinder seal from Ayanis Fortress (after Erdem 2013, pl. 11).

RHYTA/CULT VESSELS

Excavations in the Urartian lands have brought to light what kind of rhyta were used in Urartian culture. Although there is no certain data about their cultic meanings, Assyrian depictions depict the use of metal rhyta in rituals, which gives some indirect indication as to the cultic use of such vessels.[43]

Rythons in Urartian culture are mostly formed as modelled figures on the rim of the vessels or in the shape of a figure as a whole. Based on archaeological data, they can be separated into two categories according to their shapes: 'vessels with animal figures' and 'boot-shaped vessels". Those with animal figures are seen both as modelled figures on the rim of vessels or in the shape of the figure itself, while the latter is only made in boot shape. Among animal figures, a bull's head is the most common one besides a lion's head. Excavations in Toprakkale yielded a rim sherd of a pithos, decorated with a lion attacking a bull[44] (Fig. 25). A complete red burnished pottery cauldron with three bull's head attachments from a museum collection is a good example of the existence of pottery cauldrons, which are generally compared with bronze cauldrons with attachments, like one found in Altıntepe. They are thought to originate from Phrygia, Syria, northern Iran or Greece.[45] Another pottery sherd with bull's head is also known from Van Museum, black in colour[46] (Fig. 26). A single example of a bird's head attachment was found in recent excavations at the Ayanis Fortress (Fig. 27).

Archaeological results indicate the existence of boot-shaped beakers in Urartu, however their meaning in Urartian culture is not known. Boot-shaped vessels are as common as vessels with animal figures. Complete boot-shaped beakers were found in the Karmir-Blur excavations.[47] The Ayanis excavations also provide a boot-shaped beaker though incomplete (Fig. 28).

Apart from rhyta, composite vessels are another pottery type found in Urartian culture. They usually consist of a combination of two or three pots with a single handle. They might have been used for ritual purposes.

[43] Rivka 1991, 226, fig. 6.1.
[44] van Loon 1966, 33, fig. 2.
[45] Rivka 1991, 226, 228.
[46] Çilingiroğlu 1997, res. 87.
[47] Piotrovsky 1967, fig. 23a–b.

Fig. 25. Pottery sherd from Toprakkale (after van Loon 1966, fig. 2).

Fig. 26. Pottery sherd from Van Museum (after Çilingiroğlu 1997, res. 87).

Fig. 27. Bird head attachment from Ayanis Fortress (Ayanis excavation archive).

Fig. 28. Boot-shaped beakers from Karmir-Blur and Ayanis Fortress (after Piotrovsky 1967, pl. 23a; Ayanis excavation archive).

Pot marks

Pot marks on vessels were applied for the first time in the Middle Iron Age by the Urartians. Of course, the role of the state is one of the most effective reasons for the appearance of the pot marks in Urartu, aligned to the necessity of controlling economy and trade. Therefore the existence of pot marks on some vessels is unsurprising for the Urartian state.

Examinations of Urartian pottery indicates that pot marks on vessels can be divided into two groups according to their functions as potters' marks or capacity marks. The first group is generally made before firing and applied by incising or impressing. This group of marks generally consists of faunal, floral, astral and architectural motifs besides fantastic creatures[48] (Fig. 29). Capacity signs might be applied before or after firing and contain cuneiforms and hieroglyphic signs. Some of the pithoi found in Urartian centres bear capacity marks which reflect the volume of pithoi (Fig. 30). However, questions about their exact volume are still under discussion.[49]

[48] Derin 1999; Erdem 2013.

[49] For discussions about the volumes of the pithoi, see Payne 2005; Sağlamtimur 2005; Mileto and Salvini 2010.

Fig. 29. Potters' marks from Ayanis Fortress
(after Erdem 2013, pl. 14).

Fig. 30. Inscription and hieroglyphic signs about volume of the vessels from Ayanis Fortress (after Mileto and Salvini 2010, figs. 9–10).

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IKONOGRAPHIE URARTUS/URARTIAN ICONOGRAPHY

Ursula SEIDL

Abstract

In the 9th century BC, the first Urartian kings imported script and visual art from Assyria in order to create a corporate image of the Urartian realm. This paper is confined to aspects of human life omitting the visualisation of the divine. The first pictorial representations depicting battle and hunt were in pure Assyrian style with only minor iconographic modifications for characteristic Urartian items. Since the end of the 9th century BC, battle scenes had been abandoned and hunting reduced to pure pursuit without representations of corpses. Besides, the Urartian artists developed an autonomous Urartian iconography for the topics of 'kingship' and 'childbirth' with their respective cult and mythology. At the time of Rusa Argishtihi in the 7th century BC, Urartian art was influenced again by the visual art of contemporary Assyria.

Im Folgenden betrachte ich die Ikonographie der irdischen Welt in Urartu während der Herrschaft der urartäischen Könige und spare die urartäsche Visualisierung des Unsichtbaren, also der Götter- und Dämonenwelt hier aus, weil diese den vorgegebenen Rahmen gesprengt hätte.

KURZER ABRISS DER URARTÄISCHER KUNSTENTWICKLUNG

Die ersten Könige des urartäischen Reichs schufen eine Art von *Corporate Identity* zur Darstellung ihrer Herrschaft. Zu diesem Zweck importierten sie kulturelle Errungenschaften von auswärts. Vom gleichzeitigen Assyrien übernahmen sie Schrift und Bild; von hethitischen Hinterlassenschaften ließen sie sich für Architektur und Keramik anregen.

Die erste öffentliche Inschrift eines urartäischen Königs, Sarduris I., ist in assyrischer Keilschrift und Sprache verfaßt und zwar von einem gewöhnlichen nordassyrischen (Brief-) Schreiber, wie Wilhelm[1] gezeigt hat. Spätestens seit der Zeit seines Sohnes Ishpuini wurde sie zur Verschriftlichung der urartäischen Sprache ausgebildet und diente fortan königlichen Inschriften als Ausdrucksmittel.

[1] Wilhelm 1986.

Parallel dazu wurde die assyrische Bildkunst eingeführt und der urartäischen Herrscher-Ideologie dienstbar gemacht. Faßbar zur Hauptsache an militärischer Ausrüstung aus Bronze für Mann und Wagen, entwickelt sich diese Bronzekunst im Dienste der Könige[2] in drei Phasen: eine konstituierende im 9. Jahrhundert, eine typisierende im 8. Jahrhundert und eine von neuen Impulsen geprägte Phase zur Zeit von Rusa, dem Sohn des Argishti (Rusa III.),[3] im 7. Jahrhundert.

Zur ersten Phase der urartäischen Königskunst gehört die runde, flache Bronzescheibe in Fig. 1, in deren Zentrum eine Gottheit im Flügelring mit göttlichen Atlanten dargestellt ist, wie wir sie von der assyrischen Glyptik des 9. Jahrhunderts kennen,[4] und deren Rand ein Kampffries umzieht, dessen nächste Parallelen auf Orthostatenreliefs Assurnasirpals II. zu finden sind (Fig. 2). Doch sind die Sieger durch einige Antiquaria eindeutig als Urartäer charakterisiert: Bartlosigkeit und die Deichselzier, die aus einer Scheibe mit hochstehenden Zungen besteht. Es dürfte sich hier also um das Werk eines assyrischen (oder assyrisch geschulten) Künstlers handeln, der im Auftrag des urartäischen Königs arbeitete, vielleicht gleichzeitig mit dem assyrischen Schreiber, der die Inschrift an der Sardursburg für Sarduri I. verfaßte, spätestens aber zur Zeit von Ishpuinis Alleinherrschaft, denn die gleichartig bewegten Szenen auf dem Weihschild von Ishpuini und seinem Sohn Minua aus Anzaf[5] wirken gröber und zugleich routinierter.

In der zweiten Phase, die hauptsächlich von Werken aus der Zeit von Argishti I. und Sarduri II. im 8. Jahrhundert belegt ist, kommt die narrative Darstellung zum Erliegen und wird von Reihungen einzelner, qualitätvoll gearbeiteter Motive abgelöst, wie zum Beispiel Stiere und Löwen auf Schilden und Köchern,[6] Genien mit Sakralbäumen[7] und segnender Herrscher im Wagen auf Helmen (Fig. 7).[8]

[2] van Loon 1966: „Court Style".

[3] Da einerseits zwei Steleninschriften (*CTU* A 14-1, 14-2) Rusa, Sohn des Erimena, als Gründer von Rusahinili/Toprakkale ausweisen, andererseits dort gefundene Siegelabdrücke der Verwaltung von Rusa, Sohn des Argishti (Seidl 2001), die Benutzung dieses Ortes zur Zeit des letzteren belegen, muß Rusa Erimenahi vor Rusa Argishtihi geherrscht haben. Rusa Erimenahi könnte dann der 714 von Sargon II. besiegte Rusa/Ursa (Roaf 2012), oder der Rusa/Ursa, der 713 einen Vertrag mit Am(ba)ris von Bīt Puritish schloß (Seidl 2007; 2012a), oder ein Herrscher zwischen Argishti II. und dessen Sohn Rusa (Fuchs 2012, 147–49) gewesen sein.

[4] Amiet 1973, Nr. 413.

[5] Belli 1999, 66–88, Pl. 21–32.

[6] Seidl 2004, 86–88, Pl. 13b, c–16.

[7] Dezsö 2001, Nr. 91–98.

[8] Dezsö 2001, Nr. 91–99.

Fig. 1. Bronzescheibe mit Schlachtdarstellungen in Karlsruhe (Rehm 1997, Nr. U29) (Zeichnung U. Seidl).

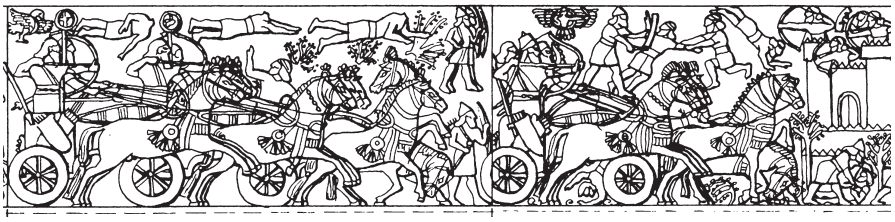

Fig. 2. Orthostatenreliefs aus dem Nordwest-Palast, Nimrud (Nach Meuszinski 1981, Pl. 2, B-3/4).

Zur Zeit von Rusa Argishtihi erhält die Assyrisierung der urartäischen Kunst eine neue Qualität. Es werden nicht nur die neuen assyrischen Moden der Zeit von Sanherib und Esarhaddon in die assyrisierten urartäischen Kunstgattungen integriert, sondern auch Bereiche, die vorher von Assyrischem unberührt geblieben waren, werden erfaßt. Dazu gehört die Architektur, die vorher nur ganz selten bildlich geschmückt war und zwar mit Elementen, die in der anatolisch-nordsyrischen Tradition stehen: der Torlöwe von Gevash[9] und zwei Steinblöcke mit Bildern von Löwe bzw. Mann, die in ihrer Isolation unassyrisch sind.[10] Bei Rusa Argishtihi aber werden Wände und Eingänge wie in Assyrien mit Genien und heiligen Bäumen geschmückt.[11] Eine weitere Gattung, die erst unter Rusa Argishtihi von der königlichen Verwaltung vereinnahmt und ikonographisch assyrisiert wurde, ist die Glyptik (Fig. 6). Vor diesem Herrscher wurden Siegel in Urartu vor allem als Amulette verwendet und mit ins Grab gegeben.[12] Abdrücke von Siegelbildern sind nur auf Keramik überliefert,[13] eine Verwendung, die schon im 2. Jahrtausend bei den Hethitern in Gebrauch war[14] und auch zur Zeit von Rusa Argishtihi nicht aufgegeben wurde, wie Funde aus Ayanis zeigen.[15]

Weitere Kunstäußerungen der ansässigen Bevölkerung sind bis jetzt nur schwer greifbar.[16] Nur wenige punktuelle Einblicke sind in einigen Gattungen erkennbar, die außerhalb dynastischen Interesses lagen. Dazu gehörten Bronzegürtel der zivilen Bevölkerung, die höfische Motive übernahmen und mit unassyrischen Elementen vermischten, die eigenständigen Frauengürtel und Votivbleche, die ursprünglich von der Hofkunst geprägt waren, eigenständige Ikonographie und Stil entwickelten und nach dem Untergang des urartäischen Reiches zu ganz anderen Formen (wohl zurück) fanden.

[9] Sevin 1993.

[10] Seidl 1993, 560–61, Pl. 100.

[11] Çilingiroğlu 2001; Seidl 1993.

[12] Van (Tarhan 1994, 43–45, Fig. 19.3, 20.3); Van-Kalecik (Çavuşoğlu und Biber 2008, Pl. 16, Fig. 16.10); Iğdır (Barnett 1963, 187–92, Fig. 39.1–6, 40.1); Norşuntepe (Schmidt 2002, Pl. 86, Nr. 1352); Karagündüz (Sevin und Kavaklı 1996, 40–41, Fig. 29); Agarak (Yengibaryan 2011, Fig. 1); Nor Armavir (Karapetyan und Yengibaryan 2010, Fig. 1); Oshakan (Esayan und Kalantaryan 1988, 73, Pl. 54.7); Erevan (Biscione 1994, 135, Fig. 17); Nor Aresh (Barnett 1963, Fig. 44); Hasanlu (Marcus 1996, 147–48, Fig. 117, 118).

[13] Erebuni (Khodzhash *et al*. 1979, 108, Fig. 123; Ter-Martirosov 2012, 170, Pl. IIc); Agrab Tepe (Muscarella 1973–74, 60–63, Fig. 20.1, 21); Norşuntepe (Schmidt 2002, Pl. 86, no. 1346); Altıntepe (Özgüç 1969, 77, Pl. 54.3-4; Karaosmanoğlu 2012, 145, Fig. 14).

[14] Seidl 1972.

[15] Erdem 2013.

[16] van Loon 1966: „Popular Style"; Zimansky 1995; 2012; Köroğlu 2012.

IKONOGRAPHIE

Die Aufgabe der Ikonographie ist es nun zu versuchen, die urartäische Bilderwelt unterschiedlicher Herkunft zu erschließen. Erschwert wird dies durch die Tatsache, daß erklärende Beischriften und literarische Texte fehlen.

Das überlieferte Material legt eine Zweiteilung nach Geschlecht nahe, so daß ich zuerst die männliche, dann die weibliche Welt untersuchen werde.

MÄNNER

Kampf und Jagd

Auf dem Rand der Scheibe in Fig. 1 war acht mal der gleiche Streitwagen dargestellt, in dem ein Wagenlenker und ein Bogenschütze mit zum Abschuß eingelegtem Pfeil standen, und dessen Zugpferde über Leichen und Verwundete hinweg galoppierten. Im Unterschied zu der einheitlichen Gestaltung des Angriffs ist die Flucht der unterlegenen Gegner variationenreich gestaltet. Die Verwundeten brechen zusammen, erheben bittflehend ihre Hände oder hängen von ihrem Pferd herab; die Pferde bäumen sich auf oder stürzen nieder. All diese Bewegungsschemata finden sich auch in der assyrischen Kunst Assurnasirpals II., wie ein Blick auf Fig. 2 zeigt.

Auf drei breiten, teilweise stark fragmentarischen Gürteln verlaufen parallel in fünf Friesen übereinander abwechselnd Jagd- und Kampfszenen.[17] Wegen der etwas moderneren Streitwagen mit acht Speichen und ohne das lanzettförmige Element dürften sie während der Alleinherrschaft von Minua entstanden sein.[18] Einer dieser Gürtel, dessen Bruchstücke auf die Museen in Adana (Fig. 3) und Elazığ verteilt sind, ist größtenteils zeichnerisch rekonstruierbar[19]

Das Bildfeld ist rhythmisiert durch stereotype Angreifer zu Pferd und zu Wagen in senkrechten Fünferkolonnen. Die Streitwagen sind mit zwei Bogenschützen bemannt, die je nach vorne und hinten schießen, vor ihnen reiten Speerschleuderer. Die Gegner, in drei Reihen angreifende und verwundete Löwen bzw. Stiere und in zwei Reihen besiegte Feinde, sind im Unterschied zu den einheitlichen Siegern, wie auf der Scheibe in Fig. 1, in scheinbar individuellen Posen des Zusammenbruchs dargestellt. Von den Siegern ist nur

[17] Seidl 2004, 153, Pl. 49, 50 a, b.

[18] Seidl 2004, 160–61.

[19] Kellner 1991, Nr. 33; Sevin 2003; Seidl 2004, 153, br-15, Pl. B 1; möglicher Weise gehören drei von Yıldırım (1991, 134, Fig. 10.8.1–3) in Skizzen publizierte Fragmente zu demselben Gürtel.

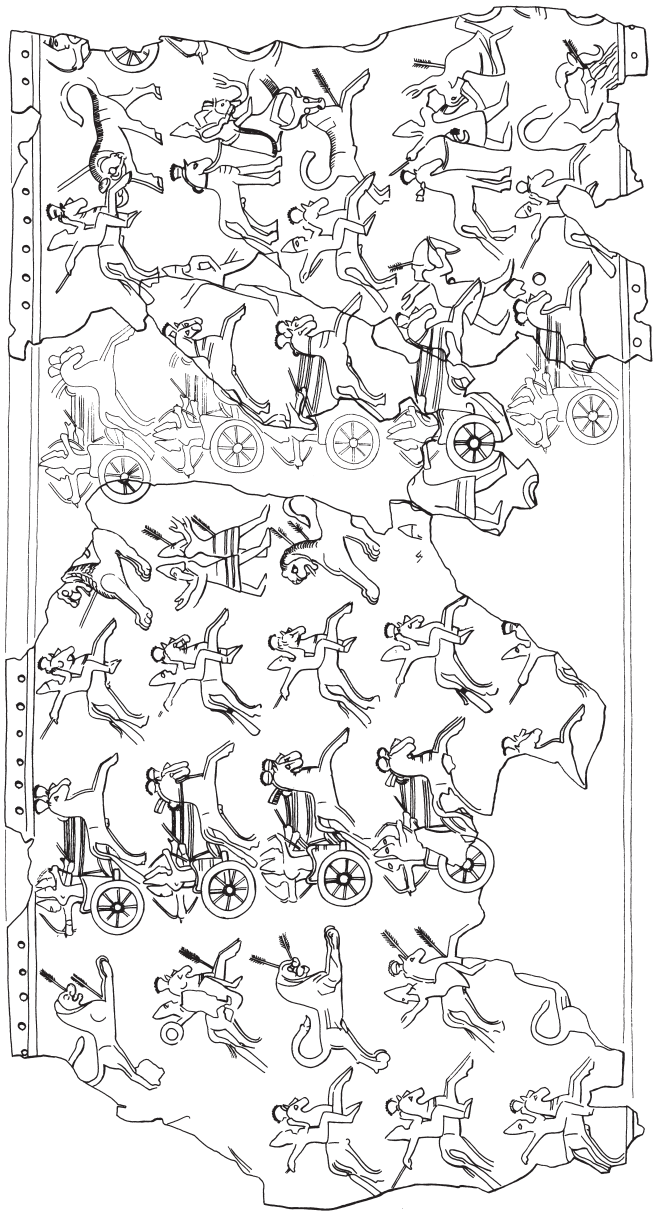

Fig. 3. Gürtelfragment im Museum Adana (Zeichnung J. Denkinger).

gelegentlich einer von seinem Wagen oder Pferd abgestiegen, um einen einzelnen Feind zu entkleiden, zu quälen oder gar endgültig zu töten.[20] Im Unterschied zu den Darstellungen auf der Scheibe Fig. 1, dem Schild von Ishpuini und Minua aus Anzaf[21] und einem schmäleren Gürtel[22] sind hier keine Leichen wiedergegeben. Bis jetzt sind keine Kampfdarstellungen bekannt geworden, die wesentlich jünger sind als die auf den genannten Gürteln, während Jagden ein wichtiges Thema bleiben.

Die Jäger sind wie die Krieger mit konischem Helm und gelegentlich mit Schuppenpanzer und sogar Schilden ausgerüstet, also eigentlich ebenfalls als Krieger gekennzeichnet. Jagden in vereinfachter, stereotyper Form bilden den Hauptschmuck von mittelbreiten Gürteln, den Gürteln der Bevölkerung, wie sie in Privatgräbern gefunden werden. Sie sind bis zum Ende des urartäischen Reiches in vielen Variationen unzählige Male dargestellt.[23] Es handelt sich dabei allerdings eher um Verfolgungen ohne todbringende Schüsse. Die von Pfeilen getroffenen Tiere laufen in der üblichen Haltung weiter. Die Einstreuung von Mischwesen sowohl auf Seiten der Verfolger wie auf Seiten der Verfolgten zeigt, daß nicht reale Jagden wiedergegeben sind, sondern die stete Abwehr von Bedrohlichem, die aber nie zum finalen Abschluß gebracht wird.

Aus dieser Geisteshaltung mag auch die Abkehr von Kampfbildern herrühren, denn Schlachten sollen Ergebnisse erzielen, wie in den urartäischen Königsinschriften ausgeführt wird. Die Vermeidung der Darstellung von toten Körpern, menschlichen und tierischen, könnte vielleicht durch ein Tabu bedingt sein, das die Darstellung des Toten verbietet. Dies ist eine entschiedene Abkehr von assyrischer Ikonographie. Diese Einstellung könnte auch die Ursache für die nachträgliche Beseitigung der Gefallenen, die ursprünglich unter den galoppierenden Pferden eines leeren Streitwagens lagen, auf der Stele im Museum Van sein.[24]

[20] z.B. Fig. 3 rechts, zweite und vierte Reihe.

[21] Belli 1999.

[22] Çavuşoğlu 2005 (die Fragmente des mittelbreiten Gürtels dürften ungefähr gleichzeitig sein, denn sein Randdekor kommt außerdem bei auf Minua datierten Bronzen vor (vgl. Seidl 2004, 122, Fig. 93: C.19, 20); eine einzelne geköpfte Leiche mit Geier findet sich noch einmal auf einem viel jüngeren Gürtel zwischen laufenden Mischwesen (Bahşaliyev 1997, 177, Pl. 26).

[23] Kellner 1991, 36–47, Nr. 53–110.

[24] Calmeyer 1974, 55–59, Pl. 10.2–12.2; mit abweichender Deutung.

Königtum

Weder in den Kampf- noch in den Jagdszenen ist eine Einzelgestalt als Anführer herausgestellt und könnte als König erkannt werden. Das Motiv des kämpfend siegenden Königs, das in der assyrischen Kunst so oft begegnet, ist, soviel wir bis jetzt sehen, nicht in die urartäische Ikonographie übernommen worden.

Bis vor kurzem hatten wir überhaupt keine Vorstellung, wie urartäische Könige vor Rusa Argishtihi (Fig. 6) im Bild dargestellt sein wollten, oder sich zumindest mit einem Darstellungsvorschlag auseinander setzten, bis Mirjo Salvini auf einem von Rusa Argishtihi dem Gott Haldi geweihten Helm aus Ayanis eine Besitzerinschrift von Ishpuini entdeckte.[25] Dieser Helm (Fig. 4) zeigt im von zwei gebogenen Wülsten gerahmten Frontschild den verdoppelten assyrischen König, wie er zur Flügelsonne betet, die über einem Sakralbaum schwebt. Dieses in Assyrien häufig dargestellte Motiv ist auch drei genuin assyrischen Helmen eingepunzt.[26] Der Helm aus Ayanis ist aber wegen des für Ishpuini typischen Quastenfrieses[27] als urartäisches Werk erkennbar; ungewöhnlich für einen assyrischen Helm wäre ebenfalls die Reihe von stehenden Vögeln auf der Rückseite. Diese Einzelheiten beweisen zusammen mit der Inschrift, zu der auch das urartäische Piktogramm „Stierkopf“ gehört, daß der Helm aus Ayanis für den urartäischen König Ishpuini hergestellt wurde und der dargestellte König diesen urartäischen König wiedergibt. Ikonographisch, stilistisch und in der künstlerisch geringen Qualität steht dem Ishpuini-Helm ein anscheinend unbeschrifteter Helm der Sammlung Ebnöther nahe (Fig. 5).[28] Auf ihm ist die zentrale Szene durch Schutzgenien erweitert, wie sie im selben Zusammenhang auch in der assyrischen Kunst vorkommen, und auf der Rückseite ist der Empfang von Tribut durch den König wiedergegeben, ein ebenfalls häufig wiederholtes assyrisches Motiv.[29] Auf der rechten Seite steht der König mit seinen Gefolgsleuten, von denen der erste einen Schirm, ein übliches königliches Würdezeichen,[30] über ihn hält. Ihm gegenüber steht eine gleichartige Gestalt, der in der assyrischen Ikonographie der Kronprinz entspräche, der dort allerdings nicht die Königskrone sondern nur ein Diadem als Würdezeichen trägt.[31] Hier dürfte es sich um Minua handeln, der in den Inschriften häufig zusammen mit Ishpuini auftritt, allerdings ohne Königstitulatur,[32] diesem Rangunterschied dürfte ikonographisch der fehlende Schirm entsprechen.

[25] *CTU* IV, 61–62, Nr. B 12-9 mit Foto des gereinigten Helms.
[26] Dezsö 2001, 26–30, Nr. 3, 4, 5 [fragmentarisch]; Nr. 7 [Berg statt Baum].
[27] Seidl 2004, 121–22, Fig. 93.
[28] Dezsö 2001, 30–32, Pl. 7–8.
[29] Bär 1996.
[30] Roaf 2009.
[31] Reade 1980–83.
[32] Salvini 1995, 38–49.

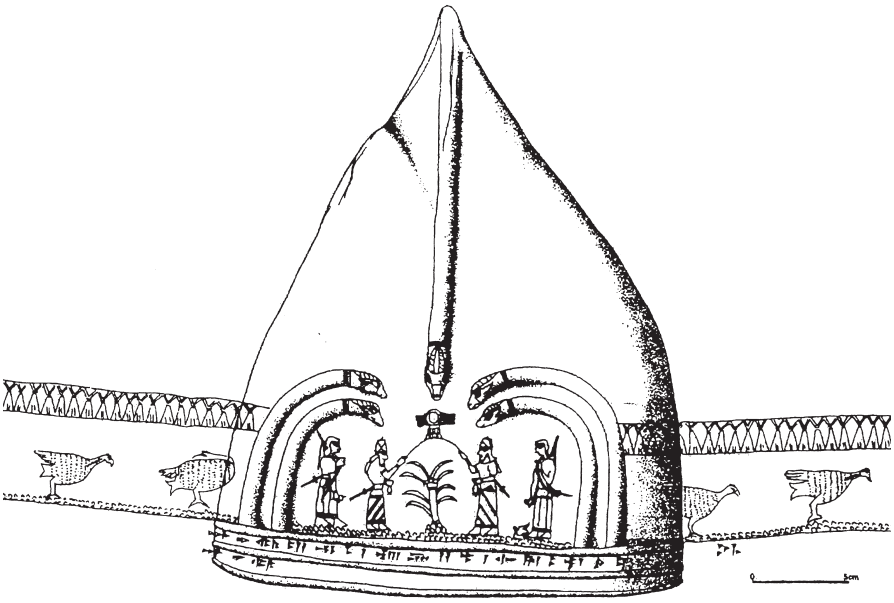

Fig. 4. Helm aus Ayanis mit Inschriften von Ishpuini und Rusa Argishtihi (Nach Çilingiroğlu und Salvini 2001, 181, Fig. 13, Nr. 59).

Der in Assyrien bis zum Untergang des Reiches so wichtige ikonographische Komplex des lebenden Königs als Beter und als Tribut-Empfänger und des kämpfenden sowie siegenden Heeres wird bald nach den ersten Auftritten in der Zeit von Ishpuini in der urartäischen Bildkunst wieder aufgegeben, während in den gleichzeitigen Inschriften Eroberung mit Erlangung von Beute eines der Hauptthemen bildet.

Ein Bild des regierenden urartäischen Königs begegnet erst wieder etwa 150 Jahre später zur Zeit von Rusa Argishtihi auf zwei Typen von Königssiegeln. Zum ersten Typ gehören fünf Rollstempelsiegel, deren Zylindermantel den König mit seinem Schirmträger, einen Löwen und einen Dreizack und deren Stempel entweder einen Löwen oder einen Stier zeigen (Fig. 6). Sie sind zahlreichen Tonverschlüssen aus Bastam und aus Toprakkale eingestempelt.[33] Das bis jetzt nicht deutbare Motiv des Zylinderbildes[34] könnte von einem assyrischen, königlichen Stempeltyp aus der Zeit von Sanherib/Esarhaddon angeregt

[33] Seidl 1979, Nr. B 1; 1988, Nr. B 1–4; 2001, Nr. 1–3, Fig. 1–2.

[34] Seidl 1979, 142–43; 1988, 149–50. Für den einigen Bullen aus Ayanis eingeritzten Dreizack schlägt Salvini (2001, 286–87, 302, Nr. CB Ay-17, 18, 19, 50) die Bedeutung „Gerste“ vor.

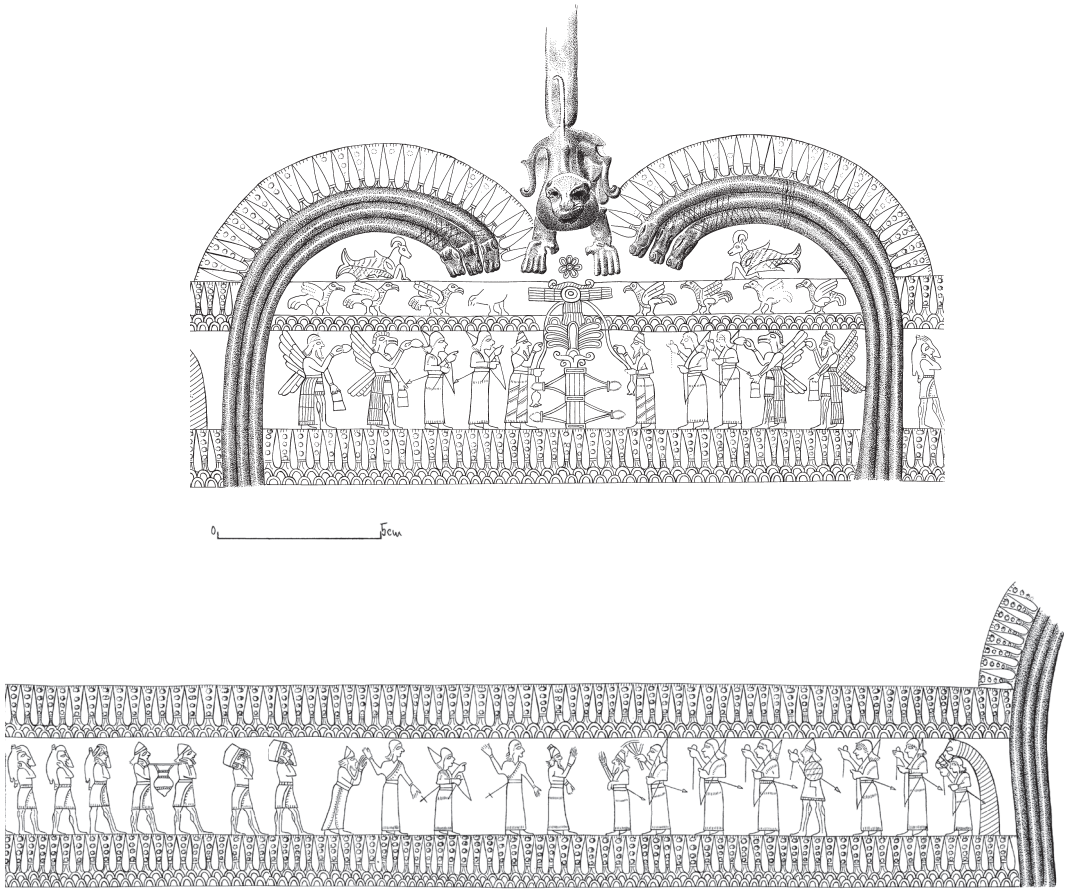

Fig. 5. Helm der Sammlung Ebnöther, Schaffhausen (Zeichnung C. Wolff).

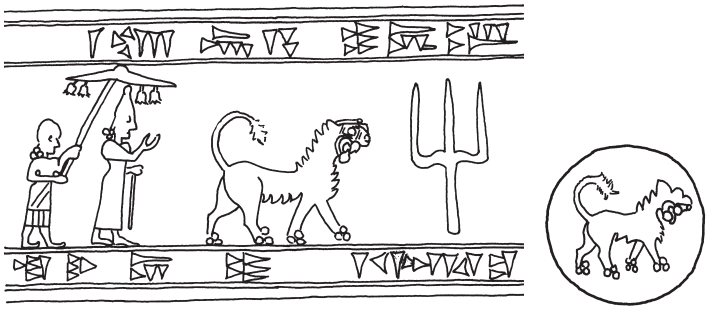

Fig. 6. Siegelbild von Rusa Argishtihi aus Bastam (Zeichnung U. Seidl).

sein, auf dem der vom Schirmträger begleitete König sich einem aufgebäumten Pferd zuwendet.[35] Zum zweiten Typ gehört ein ziemlich großer, rechteckiger Stempel mit dem Bild des Königs unter seinem Schirm, der auf Bullen aus Ayanis[36] und auf einer Bulle mit Aufschrift ^{d}Haldi.URU aus Ziviyeh abgedrückt ist.[37]

Außer den ephemeren Bildern aktueller urartäischer Könige existiert ein rein urartäisches Ikon, das für das urartäische Königtum zu stehen scheint. Es ist das vielfach wiederholte Motiv des Wagens mit einem Wagenlenker und einer unbewaffneten, bärtigen Gestalt, die grüßend ihre rechte Hand erhebt, und zweier Reiter, die den Wagen begleiten (Fig. 7). Diese Gruppe ist auf zahlreichen Helmen und Köchern mit Weihinschriften von Argishti I. und Sarduri II. in vielfacher Wiederholung dargestellt, in Reihen, in denen jeweils Reiter und Wagen abwechseln.[38] Das Motiv erscheint auch schon mit altertümlicheren Wägen, so ist auf einem Fragment die Form des 9. Jahrhunderts mit lanzettförmigem Element zwischen Wagenkasten und Joch zu sehen.[39] In ausführlicherem Zusammenhang ist das Motiv auf einem breiten Gürtel erhalten (Fig. 7),[40] der wegen des Fehlens des lanzettförmigen Elements zusammen mit sechsspeichigen Wagenrädern am ehesten zur Zeit Minuas entstanden sein dürfte; hier wird der Wagen eindeutig von zwei Reitern begleitet. Das legt nahe, auch die jüngeren Darstellungen so zu lesen, daß zu jedem Wagen zwei Reiter gehören, also die zwischen die Wagen geschalteten Reiter jeweils zum vorderen und hinteren Wagen mit gesehen werden müssen. Untermauert wird diese Annahme durch gestaffelt nebeneinander Reitende an Stellen, an denen

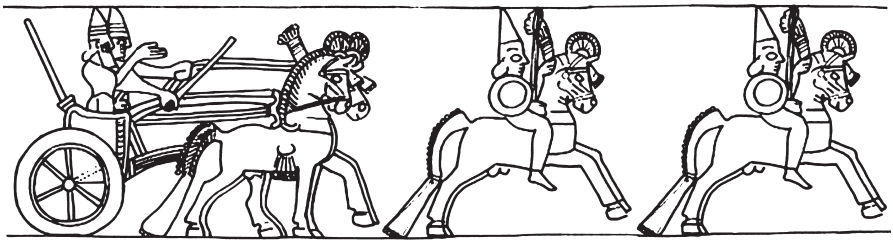

Fig. 7. Wagen und Reiter auf einem breiten Bronzegürtel (br-8) (Zeichnung C. Wolff).

[35] Seidl 1988, 150; Herbordt 1992, 138–41, Pl. 20.2, 3; 33.11, 12.
[36] Abay 2001, 327–29, Nr. A2; Salvini 2001, 316, Nr. Seal Ay-1; *CTU* IV, 211: Sig.12-3.
[37] Unpubliziert: Seidl 1988, 150, n. 8.
[38] Seidl 2004, 150–52, Fig. 105, Pl. 47, 48a, d; 204.
[39] Seidl 2004, Pl. 46b.
[40] Kellner 1991, Nr. 117+118+120; Seidl 2004, 151, Pl. 47.

das Bildfeld beengt ist, wie auf der Front eines Helms in Gaziantep.[41] Anders als bei den Kampf- und Jagdszenen, in denen Wagen- und Reitpferde gleichermaßen galoppieren, ist die Schrittfolge hier unterschiedlich: Wagenpferde im Pass und Reitpferde im Galopp. Es ist also keine einheitliche gemeinsame Aktion, sondern vielleicht eine Geschichte in zwei Episoden visualisiert.

Dieses Motiv des grüßenden Herrn im Wagen, begleitet von zwei Reitern, ist durch urartäische Texte nicht deutbar, doch könnte eine Passage im Bericht der Plünderung des Haldi-Tempels von Musasir einen Hinweis in die richtige Richtung geben.[42] Angesprochen wird dort das Bild (*ṣalmu*) des Ursa/Rusa mit seinen zwei Reitpferden und seinem Wagenlenker, auf dessen Sockel eingeprägt sei: „Mit meinen beiden Pferden und meinem einzigen Wagenlenker habe ich die Königsherrschaft über Urartu erlangt." Es fällt auf, daß in der Aufschrift selbst kein König genannt ist. Da der assyrische Beute-Offizier den Text wörtlich zitiert, könnte sie vielleicht in assyrischer Sprache verfaßt gewesen sein, was auf den Dynastiegründer Sarduri I. verweisen könnte, zu dem auch passen würde, daß, wie in seiner Steininschrift in Van, keinerlei göttliche Hilfe erwähnt wird.

Schwierigkeit bereitet die Angabe, daß es sich um ein Bild von Ursa/Rusa handele. Eine Erklärung könnte sein, daß Rusa ein Motiv, das schon seine Vorgänger unendlich oft in Relief wiederholt hatten, als schwere Bronzegruppe in einem Gewicht von 60 Talenten (= *ca*. 1.800 kg) im Tempel geweiht hatte, und der Beute-Offizier den Namen des Weihenden auf die dargestellte Hauptperson bezogen hat. Eine andere Erklärung könnte sein, daß Ursa/Rusa das alte Motiv für sich selbst beanspruchte. Dann wäre dieser Ursa/Rusa allerdings nicht der erbberechtigte Sohn von Sarduri II., sondern ein Usurpator und das wäre dann Rusa Sohn des Erimena, den Roaf[43] vorschlägt, in dieser Zeit anzusetzen.

Wie dem auch sei, die überlieferte Inschrift auf der Figurengruppe entspricht doch so sehr dem stereotyp wiederholten Bild des segnenden Herrn mit seinem Wagenlenker und seinen beiden Reitpferden, daß mir die mühevolle Umwandlung des Wagenlenkers (LU_2 GISH.GIGIR) in einen berittenen Kampfgefährten durch Fuchs[44] überflüssig erscheint; meines Erachtens kann der in der Inschrift nicht erwähnte Wagen mitgedacht werden, da er in der erzählten Geschichte nicht, wie die Lebewesen – Mensch und Pferd – helfend agiert. Ein wirkliches Verständnis von Bild und Aufschrift könnte allerdings

[41] Taşyürek 1974.
[42] Mayer 2013, 138–39. Z. 403–04.
[43] Roaf 2012.
[44] Fuchs 1998, 108–11.

erst ein urartäischer Text liefern, der die beidem zu Grunde liegende Realität oder auch Legende schildert. Die Geschichte selbst scheint so sehr zum Topos geworden zu sein, daß sie noch die Erzählung von Darius' Königsbestimmung durch den Betrug des Stallmeisters mittels zweier Pferde bei Herodot (3. 85–87) beeinflußt haben mag.

Dem urartäischen Königtum scheinen ferner einzelne Tiere zugeordnet zu sein; denn gelegentlich sind königlichen Besitzinschriften auf Bronzen Köpfe von einem Stier (seit Ishpuini) beziehungsweise einem Löwen (seit Minua) und ganz selten von einem Vogel (Argishti I. und Sarduri II.) hinzugefügt[45] und auf der Stempelfläche der Königssiegel von Rusa Argishtihi sind entweder Löwe (Fig. 6) oder Stier dargestellt. Davon ausgehend könnten auch die gereihten Löwen und Stiere, die seit Argishti I. königliche Weihschilde zieren, zur Königsideologie gehören. Möglicherweise sind sie die erstarrten Nachfahren der auf den breiten, offiziellen Gürteln des 9. und beginnenden 8. Jahrhunderts gejagten Stiere und Löwen (Fig. 3).[46]

Frauen

Innerhalb zweier Gattungen werden uns Blicke auf das Leben urartäischer Frauen gewährt. Auf schmalen Bronzegürteln sind Motive dargestellt, die um die Geburt kreisen, und auf Votivblechen aus Giyimli ist die Begegnung von Frauen mit einer Ishtar-Gestalt gezeigt.

Die schmalen Gürtel können auf Grund von Stil und Antiquaria in das 9. und 8. Jahrhundert datiert werden, mit einer ersten Gruppe aus der Zeit ungefähr von Ishpuini und Minua, einer zweiten von Argishti I. bis Sarduri II. und einer dritten von Rusa beziehungsweise Argishti II. Bis jetzt ist kein Exemplar aus der Regierungszeit von Rusa Argishtihi und später bekannt geworden.[47]

Die Herstellung der Votive aus dem Hort von Giyimli begann mit Darstellungen einer Ishtar-Gestalt ungefähr zur Zeit von Ishpuini, etwa zur Zeit von Argishti I. gesellten sich ihr Frauen mit Standarte oder Zweig zu, bis über das Ende des urartäischen Reiches hinaus wurden Frauen auf diesen Blechen dargestellt.[48]

[45] Seidl 2004, 49–53.
[46] Seidl 2004, 205; Fig. 108, 109; Pl. 50d, 51a–e.
[47] Seidl 2004, 133–50.
[48] Seidl 2004, 169–98.

Geburt (Schmale Gürtel)

Einblicke in einen wichtigen Aspekt des Frauenlebens gewähren Ziselierungen auf schmalen Bronzegürteln, von denen bis jetzt über vierzig, teilweise stark fragmentierte Exemplare bekannt geworden sind.[49] Soweit die Gürtel das vollständige Programm wiedergeben und nicht fragmentiert sind,[50] zeigen sie im Zentrum eine Frau, die mit angezogenen Knien in einem Sessel mit Rück- und Armlehnen hockt, auf dessen Sitz ihre Füße meistens aufgestellt sind (Fig. 8, 9, 11, 13), manchmal aber ungeschickt herabhängen (Fig. 10). Vor ihr steht ein beladener Tisch, von hinten fächert ihr eine Frau zu und vor dem Tisch steht eine andere Frau, die in einer Hand einen runden bis ovalen Gegenstand und in der anderen ein Messer hält (Fig. 9, 10, 13); bei Fig. 8 liegt ein geschwungenes Messer[51] vor ihr auf dem Tisch. Benachbart gießen

Fig. 8. Zentrale Figurengruppe auf Gürtel sm-7 (Zeichnung U. Seidl).

[49] Seidl 2004, 133–50, Fig. 97–104, Pl. 39–45; die Gürtel sind im Folgenden mit ihren dortigen Katalognummern zitiert: sm-1 …. A;

[50] Reduziertes Programm auf sm-16–21, 30; Fragmente ohne Mittelszene auf sm-22–29, 31–35, 38, 39, 41, 42.

[51] Zu eisernen Messern dieser Form aus Toprakkale: Wartke 1990, 103–08, besonders Nr. 132–134, 231 mit Vergleichen zu anderen urartäischen Fundorten.

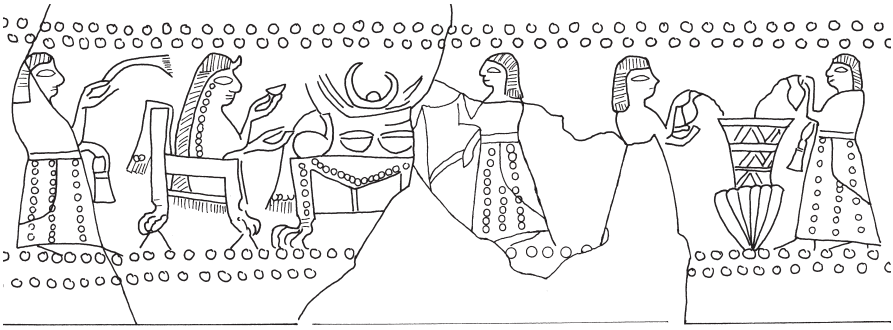

Fig. 9. Zentrale Figurengruppe auf Gürtel sm-37 (Zeichnung U. Seidl).

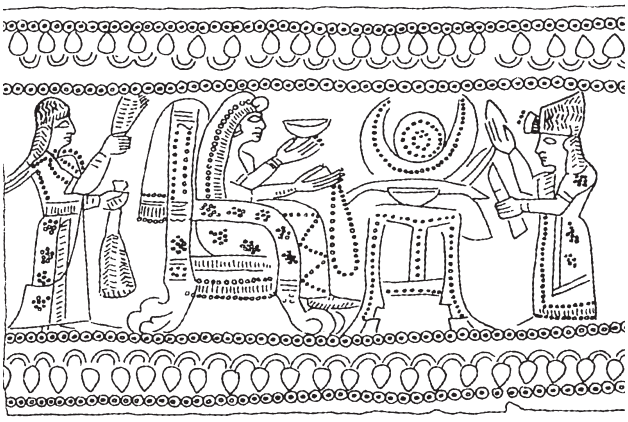

Fig. 10. Zentrale Figurengruppe auf Gürtel
(Ziffer 2002, belt 3, Fig. 3).

häufig zwei Frauen eine Flüssigkeit in einen großen Topf (Fig. 9, 11, 13). Auf die zentrale Gruppe bewegen sich von beiden Seiten Frauen, Tiere und Mischwesen zu. Unterbrochen sind diese Züge manchmal von musizierenden Frauen.[52] Bis jetzt sind nur Vermutungen zur Bedeutung der dargestellten Szenen geäußert worden: Jenseitsbilder,[53] Hochzeit,[54] Gastmahl im Haus einer königlichen Dame,[55] und Umsorgung einer hohen Frau durch junge Mädchen.[56]

[52] Seidl 2009; 2012b.
[53] Miyashita 1983.
[54] Wartke 1993, 108–09; Anlağan 1998; Belli 2007.
[55] Ziffer 2002.
[56] Seidl 2004, 148–49.

Es ist sinnvoll bei der Untersuchung von dem Gürtel in Fig. 11 (sm-36) auszugehen, obwohl er sehr flüchtig gearbeitet ist, denn er bietet die ausführlichste Darstellung. In zwei Friesen bildet das Zentrum jeweils die Frau mit langem Kopfschleier, die in einem Sessel neben einem Tisch hockt; hinter ihr steht eine Frau, die ihr mit zwei Wedeln Luft zufächelt. Die hockende Frau[57] wendet sich mit keiner Geste der vor ihr stehenden Frau zu; sie streckt nicht etwa, wie urartäische Götter oder der königliche Heros in Fig. 7, die ausgestreckte Rechte dem dargestellten Gegenüber oder vorgestellten Beschauer entgegen. Gewöhnlich hält sie mit ihrer rechten Hand eine Schale, mit der linken eine Perlenschnur. Von den Frauen, die ihr von beiden Seiten zuströmen, unterscheidet sie sich in Figur und Kleidung. Sie ist korpulenter und trägt einen vom Kopf bis zu den Füßen reichenden Schleier, während die schlanken und beweglichen Mädchen ihr Haar offen tragen. Ganz außergewöhnlich aber ist ihre Haltung. Im Alten Orient sitzt man auf Stühlen oder Hockern gewöhnlich mit herabhängenden Unterschenkel und auf den Grund oder eine Fußbank aufgesetzten Füßen. Daneben gibt es in der Frühzeit und in Iran das Sitzen mit untergeschlagenen Beinen. Aber das Kauern mit angezogenen Knien ist ungewöhnlich, es ist aber weltweit verbreitet bei Frauen, die auf einem gespaltenen Sitz hockend gebären, so bei den Hethitern – im Unterschied zu den Babylonien.[58] In hethitischen Geburtsritualen[59] ist ein ad hoc aus zwei Schemeln zusammengestellter Sitz beschrieben, zwischen die für die Sicherheit des kommenden Kindes ein Kissen auf die Erde gelegt ist;[60] in aufwendigeren Ritualen des hurritischen Milieus ist von einem eigenen Gebärstuhl, *harnau-,* die Rede.[61]

Gehen wir von der Deutung „Frau vor ihrer Niederkunft" aus, so erschließen sich uns einige andere sachliche und symbolische Einzelheiten im Bildprogramm der Gürtel. Das Messer in der Hand der gegenüber stehenden Frau weist diese als Hebamme aus, die mit dem Durchtrennen der Nabelschnur die Geburt vollendet und das neugeborene Wesen zum selbständigen Menschen macht. Das Messer wurde in Babylonien als ein so wesentliches Instrument bei der glücklichen Geburt eingeschätzt, daß es sogar zum Symbol für die Muttergöttin erwählt wurde.[62] In einer Ur III zeitlichen Inventarliste des Besitzes der

[57] Außerhalb der Gürtel kenne ich eine auf einem Schemel hockende Frau zwei Mal: in den Zipfeln eines Bronze-Pektorals im Museum Van (Çilingiroğlu 1997, 113, Res. 63) und auf einem Stempelsiegel/Amulett in Form eines Frauenkopfs (unpubliziert, im Museum Ankara Nr. 102-62-64).

[58] In Babylonien stützt sich die Gebärende auf Ziegeln auf (Krebernik 1997, 513 § 6.3; Stol 2000, 118–22; Seidl 1997, 519 § 1, Abb. 1c).

[59] Beckman 1983, 250–51.

[60] Beckman 1983, text A §§1–2.

[61] Beckman 1983, 102–04.

[62] Seidl 1997.

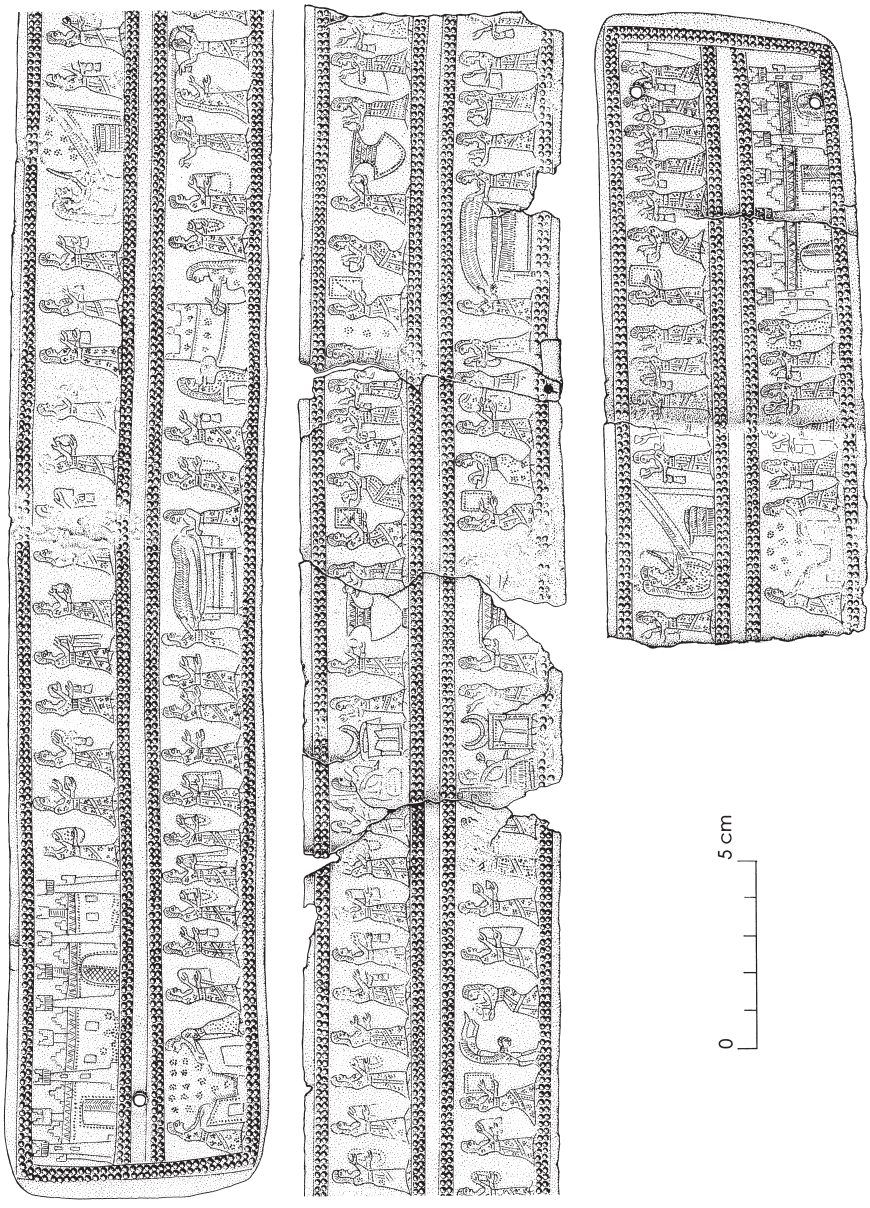

Fig. 11. Gürtel sm-36 (Zeichnung Archäologische Staatssammlung München).

Göttin Ninhursanga in Eresh sind 41 Kupfer- und 1 Silbermesser zum Durchtrennen der Nabelschnur aufgeführt.[63] Zu dem Silbermesser ist ein Gewicht von einem halben Schekel angegeben, was ungefähr vier Gramm entspricht; es dürfte sich dabei also um ein Votiv in Form eines Miniatur-Messers handeln. Die Gestalt mit dem Messer unterscheidet sich im Aussehen gewöhnlich nicht von den anderen Frauen in der Gesellschaft der Gebärenden (Fig. 8, 9, 11), außer auf einem Gürtel, den Irit Ziffer[64] publizierte (Fig. 10); dort ist sie mit einem fransenbesetzten Umschlagtuch und einer einzigartigen Kopfbedeckung ausgestattet. Durch Vergleich mit einem ähnlichen Gewand eines männlichen Beters auf einem Medaillon kommt die Autorin zur Bestimmung als Mann; doch ist die urartäische Kleiderordnung noch zu wenig bekannt, um eindeutige geschlechtliche Zuweisungen zu erlauben.

Auch einige praktische Zurichtungen werden einsichtig, wie das Herrichten eines Bettes, das Füllen eines großen Topfes mit einer Flüssigkeit, mag es sich um Wasser oder Öl für die Geburt oder Wein für die nachfolgende Feier handeln (Fig. 9, 11, 13), und das Herbeibringen von Textilien, von Essenzen in Gefäßen und von Schnüren mit magisch bedeutsamen Steinen; andere herbeigebrachte Dinge mögen Geschenke für die junge Mutter oder Zutaten zur Feier der Geburt des neuen Menschen sein.[65] Die Musik[66] sollte möglicherweise mit ihrem Trommeln, Rasseln, Klatschen und Stampfen, untermischt mit dem lauten Einzelton der Klangschale, Unheil von der Entbindung abwehren[67], andererseits könnte sie vielleicht mit Freudenklängen das neue Leben begrüßt und die folgende Feier begleitet haben. Das Weben der verschleierten Frauen am Webstuhl (Fig. 11 [2×]) könnte sowohl reale Herstellung von Textilien für das erwartete Baby, als auch Sinnbild für die Entwicklung des Embryos ausdrücken. Für andere Dinge, die auf der Realitätsebene nicht zu deuten sind, muss versucht werden, sie als metaphorische Bilder zu entschlüsseln.

Auf zahlreichen Gürteln sind Festungen mit offenen oder halboffenen Toren isoliert, ohne Einbindung in irgendeine Handlung dargestellt (Fig. 12a–d; 13).[68] Als Sprachbild ist die Festung als Metapher für Frau bis heute lebendig: die „Festung Frau“, die es zu erobern gilt, oder türkisch Kız Kale, armenisch Kuysi Amrots und persisch Qaleh Dukhtar für eindrucksvolle antike Burgruinen;

[63] Hilgert 1998, 19, text Nr. 483.5–6, 15.
[64] Ziffer 2002, belt 3.
[65] Wilcke 1985, 292–95 für Sumer.
[66] Seidl 2009; 2012b; Fig. 11 [5×].
[67] Einen geringfügigen Hinweis auf Musik während der Geburt liefert die Erwähnung des Weggehens eines Musikers (^{LU}NAR) am Ende eines hethitischen Rituals (Beckman 1983, 146–47 § 38).
[68] Seidl 2004, 145–47, Fig. 104.

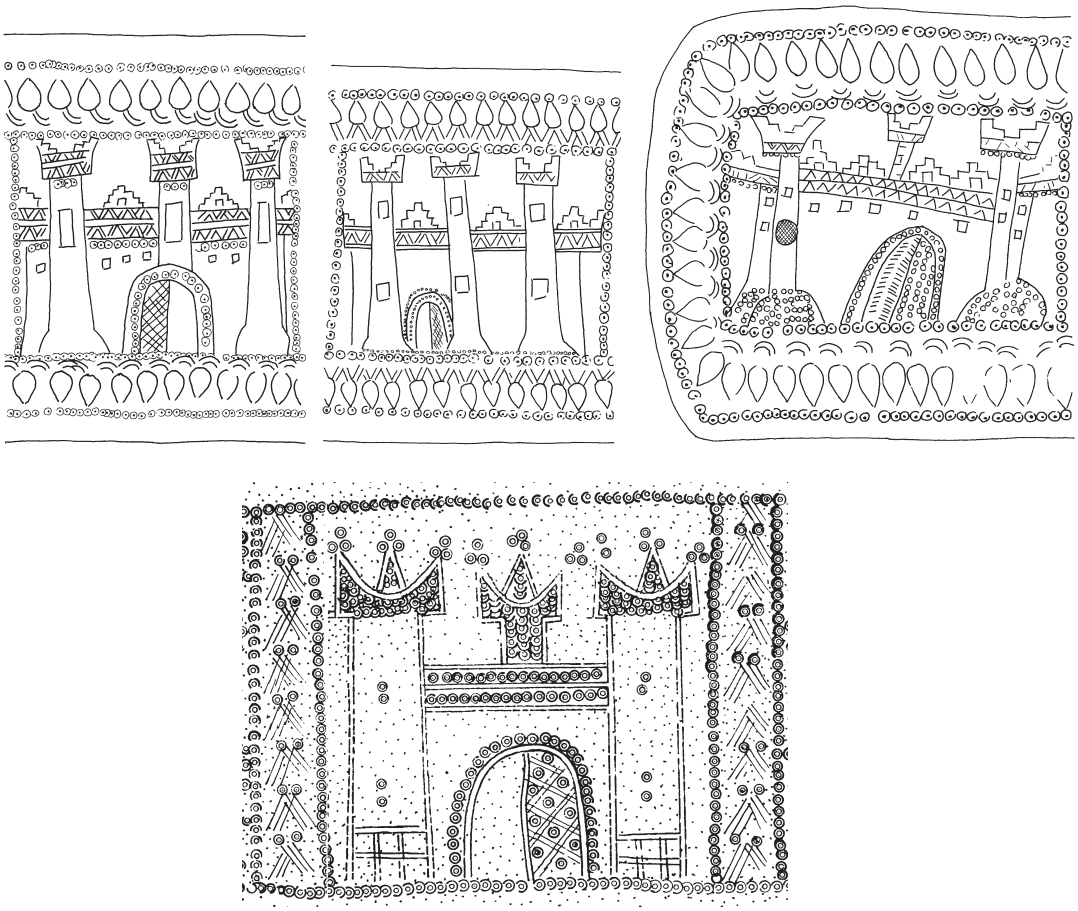

Fig. 12. Burgdarstellungen auf Gürteln; a: sm-7; b: sm-8; c: sm-12; d: sm-19 (Zeichnungen a–c: U. Seidl; d: Archäologische Staatssammlung München).

erinnert sei auch an die Mauerkrone assyrischer Königinnen.[69] Stol[70] zitiert eine Beschwörung zur Geburt, in der beschrieben ist, wie das Kind im Dunkeln erschaffen und ihm dann der Weg ins Licht gebahnt wurde: „she has spoken to the doorbolt: You are released. Removed are the locks, the doors are thrown aside." Die geöffneten Tore der Festungen erscheinen so als die Visualisierung

[69] Calmeyer 1990, 595, Abb. 1.
[70] Stol 2000, 10–11.

von Geburt. Auf dem Gürtel sm-19 (Fig. 12d)[71] steht im Zentrum eine Burg als einziges Bild, bar aller narrativer Elemente: ein eindrucksvolles Ikon für Geburt. Die Festungen auf den frühen Gürteln sind mit drei Türmen dargestellt, deren Zuordnung zueinander und zu den Kurtinen variiert; beidseitig überstehende Kurtinen dürften auf eine runde Anlage verweisen (Fig. 12a–c; 13), die aber in der gleichzeitigen gebauten urartäischen Festungsarchitektur nach Kleiss (1994) nicht nachweisbar ist. Es sieht so aus, als habe man versucht, eine literarische Beschreibung, die von einer runden Burg mit drei Türmen und einem geöffneten Tor spricht, in der Fläche darzustellen. Besser zu erkennen ist die Vorlage an einer dreidimensionalen Umsetzung (Fig. 14a, b): Ein Burgmodell aus Terrakotta[72] mit einem zylindrischen Kern, an den sich drei kantige Türme lehnen; die Frontseite mit einem Tor ist breiter als die beiden anderen, ihrerseits gleichlangen Seiten, so daß der obere Teil des dritten Turms ungefähr oberhalb des Tores zu sehen ist, wie auf Fig. 12c und d, während auf anderen Gürteln, wie dem in Fig. 12b und 13, die drei Türme gleichwertig in die Fläche gebreitet sind. Man darf wohl annehmen, daß in allen Fällen solche runden Burgen wiedergegeben werden sollten. Als Verkleinerungen waren sie wahrscheinlich in unterschiedlicher Qualität und verschiedenen Materialien hergestellt und wurden möglicherweise nach glücklicher Geburt einer Gottheit geweiht. Die Festungen auf den jüngeren Gürteln (z.B. Fig. 11), sind viel ausladender und mit mehr Türmen bewehrt; doch sind sie durch die Kurtinen an beiden Enden ebenfalls als Rundanlagen anzusehen.[73]

Ein anderes, nicht auf den ersten Blick zu deutendes Bild ist ein Töpferofen, an dem zwei Frauen sitzen. Das Motiv ist nur einmal, links im unteren Fries auf dem Gürtel sm-36 (Fig. 11) dargestellt. Beide Frauen tragen, wie die im Zentrum des Gürtels hockenden, den langen Kopfschleier; die rechte kauert auf dem Grund, während die linke mit herabhängenden Beinen auf einem Hocker sitzt. Zur Deutung verhilft eine spätbabylonische Beschwörung aus Uruk,[74] in der eine Frau mit Schwierigkeiten bei der Entbindung zum Töpferofen geht und diesen für seine Fähigkeit preist, gefüllt zu werden, zu brennen und wieder leer zu werden. Sie bittet: „Deine Unversehrtheit gib mir, und die Versehrtheit nimm weg … und meine Leibesfrucht soll unversehrt sein."

[71] Kellner 1991, Nr. 275.

[72] H 30.5; Dm 25.5 cm; angeblich aus Adharbeidjan, in London, British Museum BM 135 480; Barnett und Curtis 1973, 132, Pl. 63b; Calmeyer 1992, 99, Pl. 22.1.

[73] Die zwei berühmten Bronze-Modelle aus Toprakkale in London (Barnett 1950, 5–6, Pl. 1) und Berlin (Wartke 1990, 67–68, Fig. 11, Pl. 16a) scheiden wegen ihrer Flachheit als Vorbilder aus.

[74] Stol 2000, 133; von Weiher 1998, Nr. 248, Vs.: 26–32.

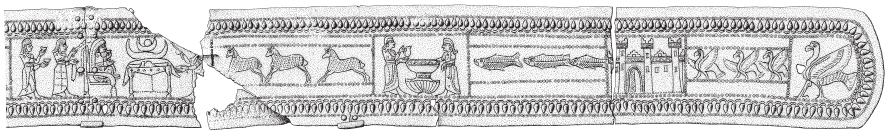

Fig. 13. Rechte Seite des Gürtels sm-6
(Zeichnung Archäologische Staatssammlung München).

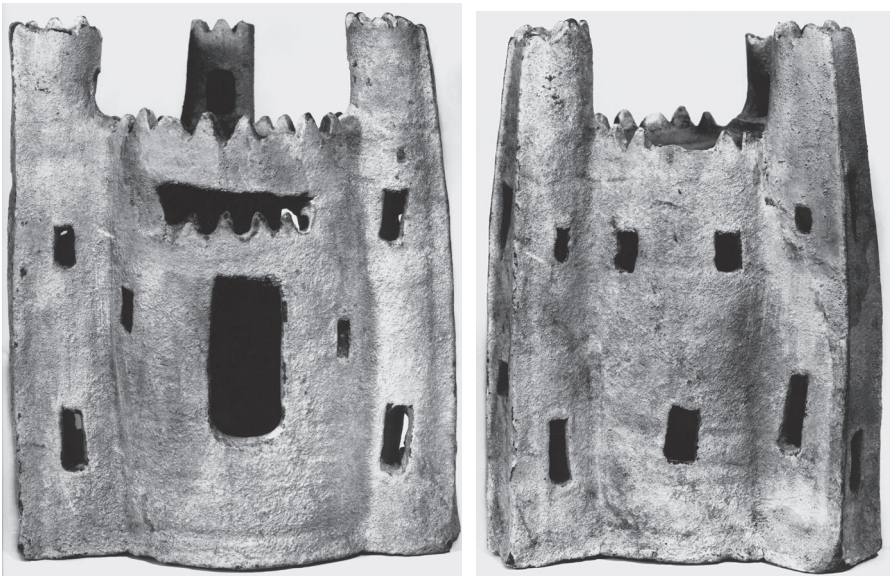

Fig. 14, a. b. Burgmodell aus Terrakotta (Foto: Yeganeh).

Das Bild zeigt die Gebärende zwei Mal am Töpferofen: rechts vor der Niederkunft, aber schon in der Gebärhocke schürt sie das Feuer im Ofen, links sitzt sie, schon schlanker nach der Geburt, normal auf einem Schemel und betrachtet die Leere des Ofens.

Einige der frühen Gürtel, auf denen die Motive häufig in Einzelfeldern isoliert sind, zeigen in schmalen Streifen jeweils Schafe, Fische und Greifvögel (Fig. 13). Diese Tiere mögen in unterschiedlicher Relation zum Thema Geburt stehen. Das Schaf kommt in derselben Beschwörung wie der Ofen vor[75]: das trächtige Schaf soll seine leichte Schwangerschaft mit der schwierigen der Frau tauschen. Die Fische könnten vielleicht wegen ihrer zahlreichen Reproduktion

[75] Stol 2000, 133; von Weiher 1998, Nr. 248, Rs.: 14'–24'.

als Vorbild dienen. Einzelne Greifvögel begegnen gelegentlich auf Votivblechen aus Giyimli in Verbindung mit den Assistenz-Göttinnen der großen Göttin, meist zusammen mit einer Wildziege[76] oder einer Kuh.[77] Außer den gereihten Tieren sind einzelne, isolierte Mischwesen in rein assyrischer Form dargestellt. Diese Sphingen, Greifen, geflügelten Rinder und Apkallus haben nichts speziell mit Geburt zu tun, sondern bieten allgemein magischen Schutz.

Die Länge der Gürtel variiert zwischen 70 cm und maximal 86 cm und beträgt bei den meisten etwa 79 cm. Sie sind also nicht geeignet für schwangere Frauen. Man könnte sich vorstellen, daß junge Frauen sie zur Hochzeit erhielten.

Frauen im Gottesdienst (Votivbleche aus Giyimli)

Etwa während der Zeitspanne von Argishti I./Sarduri II.[78] bis Rusa Argishtihi steht auf einigen Votivblechen aus Giyimli eine Frau vor einer Göttin vom Typ der Ishtar von Arbela, die ihr die rechte Hand grüßend oder segnend entgegenstreckt (Fig. 15).[79] Auf zahlreichen weiteren Blechen ist die Frau allein oder von einer zweiten begleitet -ohne Göttin- dargestellt; dieses Motiv wird bis über das Ende des urartäischen Reiches hinaus reproduziert. Gewöhnlich hält die Frau mit ihrer rechten Hand eine Standarte, die aus einer Stange und einem ungefähren Rechteck mit eingezogenen Seiten mit Quasten besteht und aus Stoff gefertigt zu sein scheint. Bei den späten Exemplaren ist die Standarte oft durch einen Zweig ersetzt. Mit der linken Hand trägt sie eine Perlenschnur oder einen kleinen Eimer und führt manchmal eine Ziege, seltener eine Kuh herbei. Bekleidet ist sie mit einem gegürteten Kleid und einem Kopfschleier, der auf den älteren Votiven wie bei der Hauptperson der schmalen Gürtel als schmale Linie der Rückenlinie folgt (Fig. 15), auf den jüngeren aufgebauscht erscheint und mit dem Gewand eine einheitliche Fläche bildet. Die Votive mit Darstellungen der großen Göttin und der Frauen sind meistens rechteckig und häufig mit Zinnen versehen. Im Unterschied dazu sind die Bleche mit den Bildern zweier göttlicher Adjutantinnen von vielfältiger Form und nie mit Zinnen bewehrt (Fig. 19). Die Standarte wird vorwiegend von den Frauen und den beiden niederen Göttinnen, aber nur sehr selten von der Ishtar-Gestalt gehalten. Nach dem Ende des urartäischen Reichs werden die menschlichen

[76] Caner 1998, Nr. 7, 178, 405, 87+429.
[77] Caner 1998, Nr. 176, 177; hier Fig. 19.
[78] Die Darstellungen auf den nicht im offiziellen Stil gearbeiteten Votiven lassen sich zeitlich nicht verläßlich einem der beiden Herrscher zuweisen.
[79] Seidl 2005.

Fig. 15. Votivblech, Orantin vor Göttin (Zeichnung U. Seidl).

Beterinnen zwar weiterhin im Profil auf gesonderten Blechen dargestellt, die Göttin aber mit ihren zwei göttlichen Begleiterinnen werden frontal gezeigt, was eine Abkehr von der assyrisierten Form und wohl eine Rückkehr zum einheimischen Bild darstellt.[80]

Bezüge zwischen schmalen Gürteln und Votiven aus Giyimli

Es stellt sich die Frage, ob die beiden Gattungen mit Frauenthemen in Relation zueinander gesehen werden können. Das bedeutet, ob auch die Votive aus Giyimli in Verbindung zu dem Thema Geburt gestanden haben könnten. Während fast des ganzen achten Jahrhunderts differieren die Darstellungen der Gürtel und der Votive nicht nur im Thema, sondern auch im Stil und entstammen unterschiedlichen Werkstätten. Erst am Ende dieses Jahrhunderts, also in der letzten Phase der Produktion von Frauengürteln gibt es eine Werkstatt, die sowohl Votive als auch Frauengürtel herstellte.[81]

Zu dieser Gruppe der „grimmigen Frauen" gehören sieben Votive mit dem gängigen Motiv der meist paarweisen Beterinnen mit Standarte, die sich aber von den Frauen auf den üblichen Votiven dadurch abheben, daß sie unverschleiert sind, so, wie wir es von den dienstbaren Frauen auf den schmalen Gürteln kennen.[82] Desselben Aussehens sind drei Frauen, die zusammen mit einer am Tisch Sitzenden aus einem Gürtel ausgeschnitten und zu einem Votiv umgearbeitet wurden.[83] Stilistisch nahestehend, doch durch einige Antiquaria abweichend sind ein fragmentarischer Gürtel (Fig. 17: sm-14)[84] und ein genuines Votiv (Fig. 18),[85] die gleichermaßen die Umsorgung der sitzenden Frau zeigen, die auf dem Votiv sogar selbst das Messer hält.

Mit derselben Stilgruppe verbunden ist das einzigartige Votiv Fig. 16.[86] Das Blech ist im Ganzen als dreitürmige Festung gestaltet, deren pompöses Tor in der rechten Kurtine geschlossen ist. Neben diesem steht der Gebärstuhl, auf dem eine Frau nach links gewandt kauert; sie hält mit einer Hand die gängige Schale, mit der anderen aber nicht die übliche Perlenschnur sondern etwas, das dem Fächer auf dem Gürtel in Fig. 17 und dem Votiv in Fig. 18 gleicht. Die flammenförmigen Protuberanzen an ihrem Schleier kommen nur noch einmal

[80] Seidl 2004, 195–97.
[81] Seidl 2004, 139–40, 187–88: Einheit b „Die grimmigen Frauen".
[82] Taşyürek 1980, 208–11, Pl. V–VII, Fig. 8, 12; Caner 1998, Nr. 418–422.
[83] Kellner 1991, Nr. 263; Seidl 2004, 137, 139, Fig. 98: sm-35.
[84] Zu diesem Gürtel gehört wahrscheinlich ein kleines Fragment mit Knospenbändern, das Erzen (1974, Res. 29, 30) in Giyimli ausgegraben hat.
[85] Caner 1998, Nr. 423.
[86] Caner 1998, Nr. 424; Seidl 2004, Pl. 65.

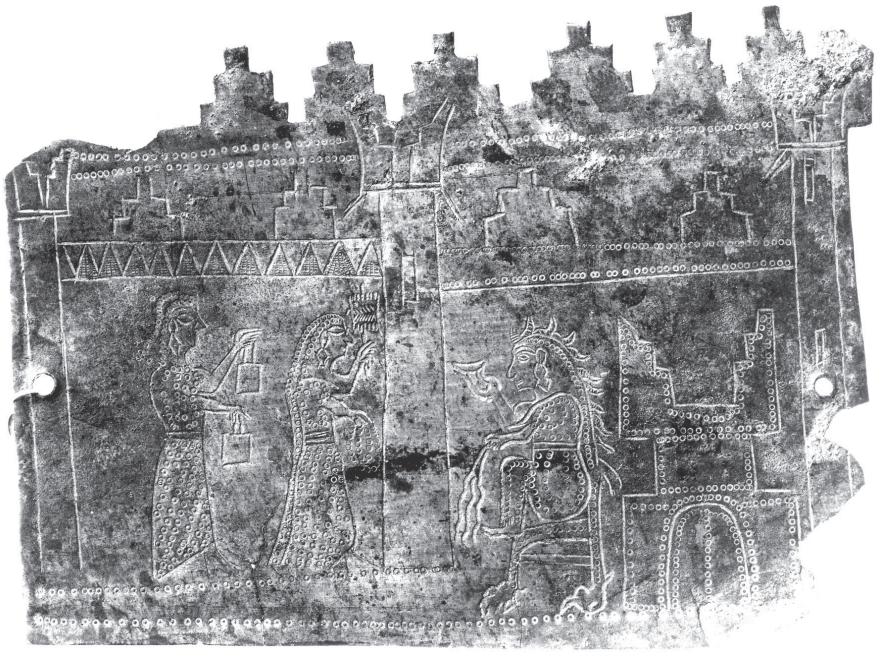

Fig. 16. Votivblech (Foto: Musée du Louvre, Paris).

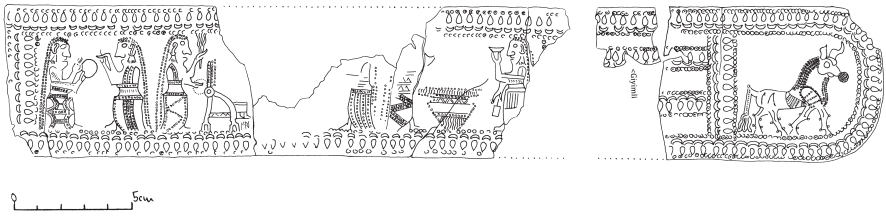

Fig. 17. Fragmentarischer Gürtel sm-14 (Zeichnung U. Seidl).

auf einem der von Ziffer[87] publizierten Gürteln vor; sie mögen, wie bei der Feuer-Analogie in der Ofenbeschwörung auf die Schwangerschaft verweisen.[88] Ungewöhnlich ist, daß die Hauptperson nach links gerichtet kauert, und daß der Speisetisch fehlt. Vor ihr, jenseits des mittleren Turmes stehen zwei

[87] Ziffer 2002, belt 1.
[88] Stol 2000, 133; von Weiher 1998, Nr. 248, Vs.: 26–32.

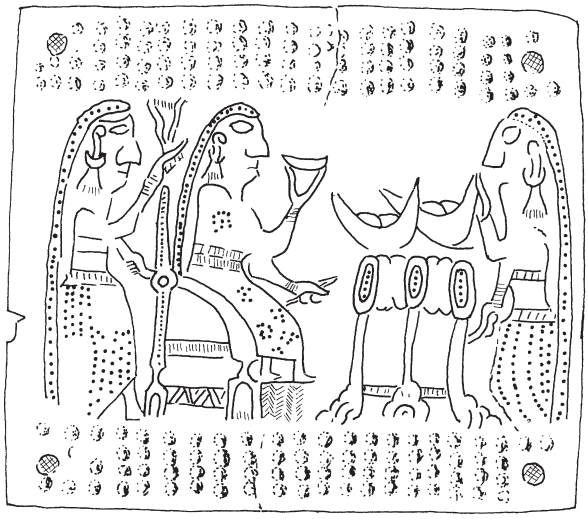

Fig. 18. Votivblech (Zeichnung U. Seidl).

Frauen: die erste mit Schleier hält die Standarte und eine doppelte Perlenschnur, entstammt also der Ikonographie der Votive; die zweite barhäuptig mit zwei Eimerchen gehört zusammen mit Festung und hockender Frau zum Repertoire der Gürtel. Die Vermischung der Bildprogramme von Gürtel und Votiv weist auf eine gemeinsame Bedeutungssphäre. Wenn wir die Darstellungen auf den schmalen Gürteln zu Recht als praktische, magische und symbolische Vorbereitungen zur Geburt deuten, dann müssen die Bilder auf den Votivblechen aus Giyimli mit dem selben Thema verbunden sein. Versuchen wir, die Szene Fig. 16 mit Hilfe des Bildrepertoires der Gürtel zu deuten, dann haben wir rechts eine kreißende Frau neben einem versperrten Tor, das im Kontrast zum geöffneten, dem Zeichen für eine problemlose Geburt, die Schwierigkeiten der Gebärenden anzeigt. Von den beiden stehenden Frauen könnte die erste mit Schleier und Standarte die Schwangere selbst in einer früheren Phase sein, die in dem Heiligtum, aus dem die Votive von Giyimli stammen, für einen guten Verlauf der Schwangerschaft und eine problemlose Geburt gebetet hat. Es könnte sich aber auch um zwei unabhängige Frauen handeln, von denen die eine mit ihrer Standarte bittfleht, die andere zu praktischer Hilfe für die Gebärende bereit steht.

Mit dem Wissen, daß die Votivbleche aus Giyimli ebenfalls mit dem Thema Geburt verknüpft sind, erhalten wir vielleicht auch Einblick in die große, bis jetzt unerschlossene Gruppe mit Darstellungen der beiden Assistenzgöttinnen,

in deren Welt irdische Frauen nicht vorkommen.[89] Die Szene auf Fig. 19a und b, eine Kuh, die von zwei göttlichen Assistentinnen umsorgt wird, verblüfft durch die Nähe zu der Beschreibung in der Beschwörung „Die Kuh des Sin“[90], in der Sin zwei Lamassus vom Himmel herabschickt, um ihr bei schwieriger Geburt beizustehen. Die eine brachte ein „Töpfchen mit Öl“, mit dem sie die Stirn der Kuh einrieb, wie auf Fig. 19a zu sehen, die andere „Wehenwasser“, mit dem sie den ganzen Körper besprühte. Die Wellenlinien an dem Topf vor der Kuh auf Fig. 19b dürften auf den Verwendungszweck des Inhalts verweisen, eine Flüssigkeit zum Versprühen und nicht kompakt zum Trinken. Nach dreimaliger Wiederholung der Prozedur, „fiel das Kalb wie ein Gazellenjunges heraus zu Boden“. So leicht wie diese Kuh „möge auch das Mädchen, das (so) große Schwierigkeiten hat, gebären.“ Dargestellt ist hier eine mythische Szene, die in Analogie zur irdischen rezitiert wird. Möglicherweise läßt sich für das am häufigsten dargestellte Bild, die Assistenzgöttinnen zusammen mit einem Bock der Wildziege (capra aegagrus), auch ein entsprechender Text finden; vielleicht gegen Unfruchtbarkeit?

Soviel bis jetzt erkennbar, geben die beiden Medien, schmale Gürtel und Votive aus Giyimli, Einblicke in zwei für die Geburt relevante Sphären. Auf den Gürteln ist es die irdische Geburt mit ihren praktischen und magischen Vorbereitungen und symbolischen Hinweisen. Auf den Votivblechen ist es die göttliche und mythische Sphäre, in der Frauen der großen Göttin begegnen (erste Gruppe) und Hilfsgötter in mythischen Analogien Probleme der Geburt lösen (zweite Gruppe).

Schlussbetrachtung

Übernahme und Aneignung der assyrischen Kunstformen scheinen analog zur Schriftrezeption verlaufen zu sein. In einem ersten Schritt wurden Form und Inhalt gleichermaßen entlehnt und nur in einigen unabdingbaren Eigenheiten abgewandelt. So wie in der auf Assyrisch verfaßten Inschrift an der Sardursburg[91] nur die Namen urartäisch sind, so sind in den Darstellungen auf der Bronzescheibe in Fig. 1 nur identifizierende Elemente, wie die Bartlosigkeit der Sieger und die Deichselzier ihrer Wagen, urartäisch. In folgenden Schritten der Vereinnahmung werden bei der Schrift die äußere Form, nämlich

[89] Seidl 2004, 180–86: Zweite Gruppe.

[90] Farber 1987; Veldhuis 1991 (Es ist eine weit verbreitete Beschwörung, von der sich ein babylonisches Exemplar sogar in Hattuša befand [KUB IV 13]).

[91] Wilhelm 1986.

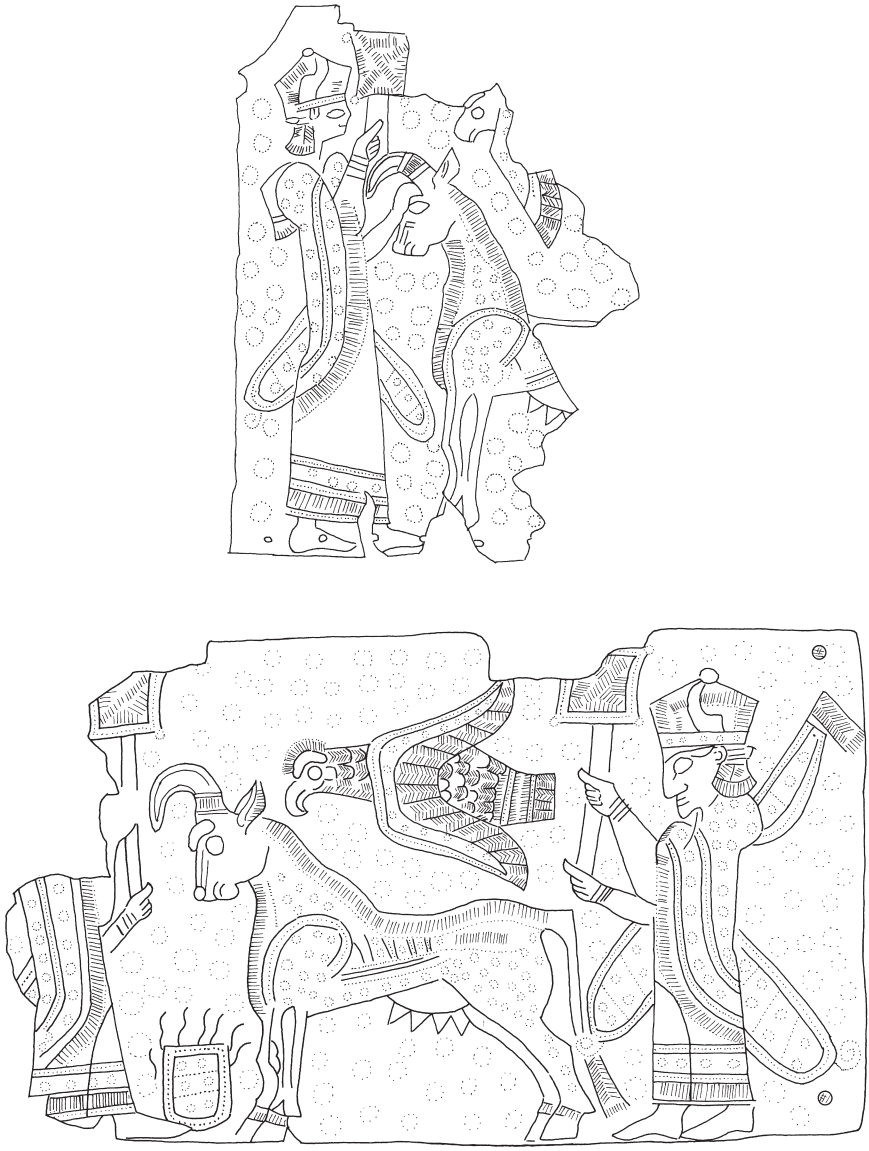

Fig. 19. Zwei Votivbleche, Assistenzgöttinnen mit Kuh und Vogel (a: Caner 1998, Nr. 177; b: Nr. 176) (Zeichnungen U. Seidl).

die Keilschriftzeichen, mit ihren lautlichen und ideographischen Bedeutungen zur Verschriftlichung der urartäischen Sprache eingesetzt. In der Bildkunst entsprechen die Formgebung von Mensch und Tier etwa dem Lautwert und komplexe Gestaltungen, wie Götterbilder (Fig. 15, 19), Herrscher (Fig. 6) oder Sieger (Fig. 1, 3), dem Ideogramm in der Schrift. Im Unterschied zu Geschriebenem (soweit wir bis heute wissen) hat sich die Bildkunst bald aus der Beschränkung auf königliche Themen gelöst und ist vielfältiger geworden. Allerdings endete sie wie das Schrifttum mit dem Untergang des urartäischen Reiches.[92]

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[92] Mit der minimalen Ausnahme der Gestalt der Beterin auf Votivblechen aus Giyimli, die noch eine kurze Zeit lang reproduziert wurde.

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URARTIAN METALWORK

Oscar White Muscarella

Abstract

The foremost problem confronting Urartian scholars is the prodigious quantity and variety of Urartian metal productions, those deriving from excavations and, to a far greater extent, those coming from plunder. Further, there exists a copious quantity of publications on excavated Urartian metal artefacts and plundered antiquities written by scholars and museum curators. Thus it is difficult and time consuming to uncover them individually or collectively, and then viably analyse, interpret and communicate the results. In 2006 I presented a general review and critique of various specialised studies of a limited number of Urartian metal productions, their ancient *loci*, modern venues and scholarly debate. In this article I submit an expanded study and present a fuller discussion of specific categories of Urartian metal constructions. This task involved exploring their excavation and plunder backgrounds, scrutinising their diverse stylistic characteristics and features, a review of how they have been studied and interpreted, and the resulting historical consequences.

Introduction

Urartian metal artefacts exist in the thousands in scores of venues throughout the world,[1] more than from most ancient Near Eastern cultures. The quintessential problem however is to comprehend that there is a large quantity of antiquities provenanced in dealers' shops, private collections and museums throughout many countries, considerably more than documented excavated artefacts. And many of these unexcavated objects remain unpublished. A primary basis for dating metal objects whether excavated or not is the presence of royal inscriptions. An early attempt to achieve a metal chronology based on inscriptions was that of Azarpay.[2] But her efforts to use the stylistic character of inscribed artefacts to date the uninscribed does not produce the desired results, given the uninterrupted local productions of similar forms. Seidl's[3] similar efforts are more thorough but also not absolute.[4] The problems are how

[1] Wartke 2012, 414–15.
[2] Azarpay 1968.
[3] Seidl 2004, 137–66.
[4] For a critique of her metal chronology, see Salvini 2007.

to interpret various artistic forms chronologically and to appraise Urartian inscriptions recovered on unexcavated bronzes:[5] if a forger copied a royal name onto an object, ancient or not, it would distort its chronology.[6] Connoisseurship (a dirty word to some 'anthropological archaeologists') and laboratory analyses are mandatory procedures to confront this problem: but here too there is corruption.[7]

The first known Urartian metal artefacts, some inscribed, came from Toprakkale near Van[8], the most recent from Ayanis on Lake Van.[9] The oldest metal objects known are those with inscriptions of Ishpuini, *ca*. 830–820 BC, on several bronzes and three silver vessels.[10] Two rare examples of an orphaned antiquity reunited with its original home are the candelabrum provenaced in Jerusalem (*née* Patnos) with an inscription of Minua, *ca*. 810–780 BC, and two separated fragments of a Giyimli plaque (below).

The only fairly secure chronological issue is that all Urartian sites, in Anatolia, Armenia and north-western Iran were violently destroyed at a time during or shortly after the reign of Rusa II, *ca*. 650–630 BC.[11] If correct, all artefacts recovered in destruction debris were in use in the mid-7th century BC.

A supplement to the excavated corpus exists on a clay tablet from Assur (now in the Louvre), a uniquely detailed document of the booty seized by Sargon II in his 714 BC campaign against the Urartian site at Musasir. Communicated is a detailed description of objects encountered within the city and its temple of Haldi, the chief deity of Urartu since the 9th century BC.[12] Musasir's geographical location has been situated by several scholars in western Iraq on the Upper Zab river,[13] and recently in a superb analysis by Radner.[14] Sargon's inventory has exact counterparts with objects presently known. He recorded objects made of gold, silver and bronze: shields of different sizes, quivers, vessels and cups, spear heads and daggers, furniture, jewellery, lamps, incense censors and candelabra; also 33 chariots of silver (line 82). And, unknown to us from excavations or plunder, cast bronze statues of Urartian kings, one the 9th-century BC Ishpuini, and those of Argishti and Rusa l, along

[5] Muscarella 2006, 174; Curtis 2009, 164; Garrison 1994, 150.

[6] For forged inscriptions on Luristan, Achaemenian and Assyrian objects with bibliography, see Muscarella 1988, 28–84, n. 4; 2000, 61, no. 13, 72, no. 17, 183, no. 39.

[7] Muscarella 2009; 2012, 122; 2013, 40.

[8] See Barnett 1950; Wartke 1990, 6–22.

[9] Çilingiroğlu and Salvini 2001.

[10] For an inventory, see Merhav 1991k, 355–57; Seidl 2004, 18–44.

[11] Kroll 1984; Hellwag 2012.

[12] Thureau-Dangin 1912, lines 346–414.

[13] Belli 1991a, 21; Bernbeck 2004, 284, citing M. Salvini and R.M. Boehmer.

[14] Radner 2012, 245–54.

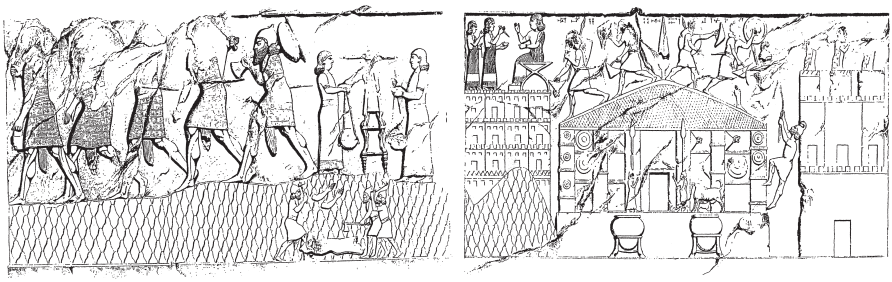


Fig. 1. Sargon II's sack of Musasir (714 BC).

with their horses and riders. No deity statues are mentioned, and none of life-size currently exists.

Correspondingly valuable[15] is the representation of the Haldi temple on Sargon's stone relief (from Khorsabad) portraying the sacking of the temple (Fig. 1). Exhibited are basins, shields with lion-head bosses positioned on the temple's walls and also being taken away as loot, two bronze-helmeted guards at the temple's entrance (mentioned in Sargon's text) and a helmeted human statue being destroyed. We are provided with an illustration of the temple's size and pitched roofing. The text and representation inform us of the types of late 8th-century BC metal artefacts, which forms we know were not limited to that time: *viz*. the shields with lion-head bosses from 7th-century BC Ayanis (below). Equally provided is evidence of the accuracy of ancient depictions of foreigners. All the Assyrian attackers have beards. The only beardless figures are two long-gowned males standing before a sitting dignitary, two flanking a scale and apparently two atop a building. Presumably they are Urartians, purposefully distinguished by the Assyrian artisans. Why these figures were casually represented is unknown.

Urartian metal is primarily of bronze, less of iron,[16] and many have adornments of great variety. Bronze is an alloy of copper and tin, and was prevalent in Anatolia from the early 2nd millennium BC. Vigorous discussions exist concerning the presence/absence of tin within Anatolia. The prime proponent for its presence has been Yener[17] and Kaptan,[18] and for its absence, Muhly[19] and Belli.[20] Belli states that only one tin mine has been recovered, in the Bursa

[15] *Pace* van Loon 1970, 174.
[16] For the latter, see Wartke 1991.
[17] Yener and Vandiver 1993; Yener *et al*. 1993.
[18] Kaptan 1995.
[19] Muhly 1993.
[20] Belli 1991b.

region, but its ancient use was not determined.[21] However, in 2013 Turkish surveys found evidence for tin mines near Kültepe (unpublished; its usage date was not revealed), which if accurate may document the presence of tin in Anatolia. Nevertheless, that tin was imported via intermediaries to the south-east is demonstrated by 2nd-millennium texts recording tin imports.

Representations on bronze objects are the primary source for information regarding Urartian culture in general: social, military and religious functions and practices; general iconography, much (if not all) inspired and authorised by the state: 'palace art' (*Reichkunst*).[22] Bernbeck[23] has plausibly suggested that the occurrence of large quantities of weapons at religious centres, outstanding at Musasir, and at Ayanis, built by Rusa ll post *ca*. 673 BC,[24] indicates that the military and religious components and ideology of Urartian society were culturally interrelated. A major difficulty to unravel is the problem as to which objects are of a *Hof*/court style and which are a *Volk*/vernacular style.[25] The fact that representations of Urartian iconography differ in details may reflect their creation in local workshops, and perhaps at different times.

Metal objects, especially plaques and belts, portray furniture, clothing of male and female royals and commoners, and numerous examples of fortresses, which also exist as small bronze models.[26] And many weapons, plaques and vessels were inscribed. Silver objects are also known, *viz*. jewellery, vessels and one belt from Altıntepe.

Modern researchers must confront the massive quantity of both excavated and plundered material existing in many publications, some not readily accessible. Hence research is arduous and time-consuming, further complicated because most Urartian material available stems from the antiquities market, and one must continuously pursue museum publications and auction catalogues.

With this in mind, Seidl 2004 is a masterly work that reveals many years of painstaking research and writing, resulting in a coherent and well-informed general source of information and bibliography. Indeed, it is the starting point for all metal research, and I have extensively used her work in this paper.[27] She provides the *loci* of excavated bronze artefacts from the time of their first appearance,[28] and information on museum collections and exhibitions of

[21] Belli 1991b, 1; 2001, 324.
[22] Piotrovsky 1967, 15.
[23] Bernbeck 2004, 301.
[24] Çilingiroğlu 2001, 45–47.
[25] Wartke 2012, 416.
[26] Vanden Berghe and De Meyer 1983, nos. 12–13; Merhav 1991i, 303, 307; Seidl 2004, 146, fig. 104.
[27] For a good review, see Curtis 2009.
[28] Seidl 2004, 3–15.

antiquities, where the terms 'illegal *ergrabern*' and *Raubgrabung auf den Antikenmarkt* sometimes appear.[29] But she does not bestow sufficient attention to the fact that the majority of the objects reviewed have been plundered, evading mentioning that they entered the antiquities' market from plunderers. She has no monopoly on this matter, as scholars and curators easily use the camouflage terms 'art market' or 'in the Trade' to describe the selling venues of antiquities, disregarding cultural and archaeological concerns.

Merhav 1991a, a Jerusalem Museum catalogue publication of Urartian metalwork, is the best of its kind. Brief essays on all types of metalwork are provided with many illustrations, thereby producing a major source of photographic information (which is often cited herein).[30] But, typical for such exhibition catalogues, it is composed exclusively of antiquities on loan from collectors and museums. Its contributors function as curators discussing plundered goodies, unswervingly avoiding the plunder word: so as not to offend the exhibition's financial supporters and lenders, the root of cultural destructions.[31] Ignored is the process that got them to Jerusalem, that following their looting they were sold to local dealers who dispatched them to smugglers, then transported by various routes to dealers across the world, who then sold them to self-proclaimed Universal Museums and to wealthy private collectors, their modern provenances.[32] The catalogue's contributors also brand non-Urartian objects as Urartian, nonchalantly ascribe antiquities to alleged sites provided by curators, or assign unexcavated assemblages to a single discovery, thereby diminishing the volume's scholarly value.[33] Other catalogues[34] also evade the plunder background of the antiquities exhibited.

Thousands of Urartian artefacts have been looted, probably from countless cemeteries, the main locus of antiquities. But some curators and scholars sitting in their offices assert with ease that a group of antiquities was recovered as a unit, obtained from a single named site, *aus einem Fundkomplex*, or from *einem zusammenhängender Fund*, *Zusammengehögkeit*, *Sammelfund*, demanding one to accept their command that the plundered and purchased corpus had

[29] Seidl 2004, 15–17.

[30] The contributors are O. Belli, P. Calmeyer, H.J. Kellner, K. Kohlmeyer, R. Merhav, M. Salvini, U. Seidl, R.-B. Wartke and G. Zahlhaas.

[31] Muscarella 2000, 205–06, n. 4. (Recorded on the first page are the names of two wealthy antiquity collectors who helped finance the Exhibition, and opposite the Contents page is a list of the museums and collectors who lent their objects.)

[32] Muscarella 2012, 111–15; 2013, 38.

[33] Muscarella 2006, 149–57; 2013, 38. Salvini (1995, 171) ignores this. (For a perceptive review, see Garrison 1994.)

[34] *Viz*. Vanden Berghe and De Meyer 1982.

been collectively kept together by both the plunderers and smugglers: all are forgeries of provenance and of ancient cultural history.[35]

Further, some scholars glibly accept a dealer or collector-created locus by accepting as archaeological fact that antiquities said-to-be Urartian were 'found' beyond the Urartian homeland, *viz*. on the shores of the Caspian Sea.[36] The revelation is that Urartian belts have been discovered (but not by archaeologists) at Tell Brak, Tell Mozan, Tell Leilan (now 'in a private collection'), Tell Baidar, i.e. in Syria and Mesopotamia.[37] Piliposyan casually claims that these discoveries document Urartian penetration into foreign territories hitherto unrecorded; he does not wonder why.[38] Ignored is the distinction between the archaeologically obtained *artefact's provenance* from the plundered *antiquity's* modern provenances.[39] An important fact is that to date no Urartian material, except for a bell and a statuette of a beardless deity, has ever been recovered outside the Urartian homeland (below).

Forgeries of Urartian bronzes exist, but compared with other cultures are not overly common, perhaps because of the quantity of plundered genuine artefacts available for sale. Most forgeries consist of modern additions of an Urartian-like scene (or inscription) on an ancient bronze object.[40]

Following is a review of most Urartian metal artefacts with a selective bibliography.[41]

Nota bene: although it is essential that scholars distinguish the excavated from the unexcavated object, it is certainly mandatory that one must study, cite and publish unexcavated objects, otherwise one could write very little about Urartian artefacts. The only stipulation is that the distinction must always be appropriately recognised.[42] And the caveat to continuously heed is that '… it is erroneous to argue in front of your data. You find yourself erroneously twisting them round to fit your theories' (Sherlock Holmes, in *The Adventure of Wisteria Lodge*).

[35] Maas 1987, 65; Muscarella 1988, 420–24, n. 14; 2000, 213–14, nn. 54–56; 2006, 151–57, 161–63; 2012, 109–10; 2013, 38–39.

[36] Muscarella 2006, 160. For other 'Caspian Sea' antiquities, see Muscarella 2013, 36.

[37] Piliposyan 1996.

[38] For examples of 'Luristan' and 'Phoenician' objects 'found' in other geographical areas, see Muscarella 1984: 63–64.

[39] Curtis 1996, 121–22; Muscarella 2006.

[40] For a listing of Urartian metal forgeries, some partly ancient, see Muscarella 2000, 146–54; 2006, 153, 165–66.

[41] I often provide several bibliographical references when discussing an object rather than a single example, because readers may not have access to one reference. For notable works on Urartian cultural and political history, writing, the complex geography separating its territory and the associated problems of local governmental cultural control, and issues related to the *loci* of many excavated Urartian objects, see Zimansky 1985; Salvini 1995; Bernbeck 2004.

[42] Muscarella 1984.

Beards: An important iconographical matter that often arises in this text is the rarity of beards on Urartian humans and deities exhibited on metal and other objects, *viz*. the beardless pantheon of deities on the Anzaf shield (below) and other representations; further other examples of deities are the same (Fig. 2),[43] and some hybrid deity figures are also beardless. The restored painting at Erebuni/Arin-Berd shows a deity who seems to be bearded; Piotrovskiy[44] states that he is beardless, as Hovhannisyan[45] makes clear.

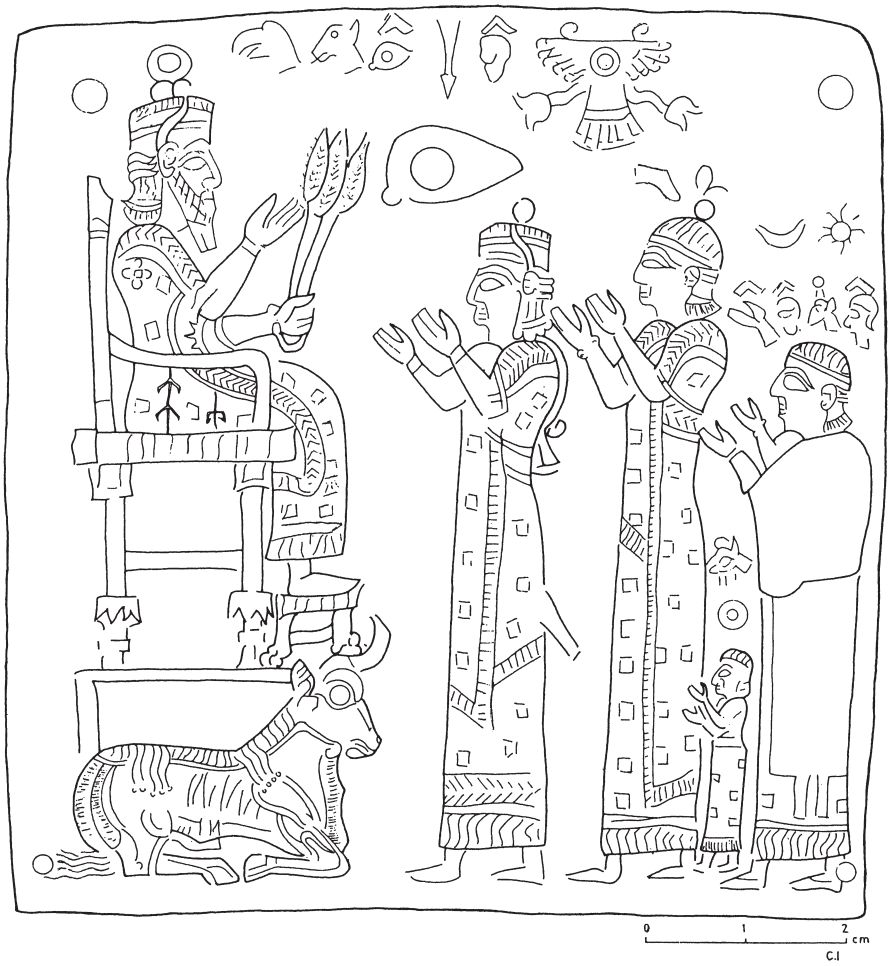


Fig. 2. Votive plaque (after Işik 1986).

[43] Işik 1985, 76, fig, 1, pl. 32; 1986, 8, fig. 8.
[44] Piotrovsky 1967, 79.
[45] Hovhannisyan 1973, 3, pls. 26, 46 (see also pls. 16, 23, 24).

Indeed, a relatively small number of representations on Urartian metal objects do show beards on humans, deities and *Mischwesen*. One example exists on a plaque with an Arghishti inscription depicting bearded and apparent beardless men.[46] As for bearded deities see Maass 1987[47] and Merhav 1991a.[48] They are *en face* and carry animals by the tails, features not known on excavated Urartian deity representations. One example on a Giyimli plaque (identified by the crenellated top) portrays a bearded four-winged deity.[49] A yoke standard[50] has three bearded winged deities; the foremost with four wings. A belt has bearded *Mischwesen*.[51] Two pectorals depict a bearded deity;[52] another has one bearded and four beardless deities.[53] A shield *im Handel* also has together bearded and beardless deities.[54] Another shield with the same scene has three bearded deities.[55] Aside from other rare features, the kneeling figures here are rare, as the authors note; [56] thus the shield is a *unicum* (courtesy of the plunderers).

I now consider a beaded figure on a plaque in Jerusalem[57] to be a probable forgery: based on the crude execution of the deity's horns, face and beard, hands and feet, as well as the shaft's leaves. Another unexcavated plaque (Fig. 2) has a scene of a bearded deity holding three palms(?) sitting on a throne that rests on a plank (unique) set across a resting bull).[58] Facing him are a beardless deity with an eye-like motif above, a normal sized human, a shorter human figure and a child. At the top is a winged motif and a hieroglyphic inscription (not deciphered). Taşyürek[59] believes it is from Giyimli, but we do not know.[60]

Thus, beards were an option but not common. Noteworthy is that Hittite representations of humans and deities never display beards, a characteristic feature.[61] Sumerian and Neo-Sumerian period representations depict both clean-

[46] Muscarella 1988, 428–29, no. 576; Merhav 1991b, 63.
[47] Maass 1987, 84, pl. 10.
[48] Merhav 1991c, 111, no. 78 with two, one above the other.
[49] Kellner 1991d, 297, fig. 12.
[50] Merhav 1991c, 112–13, figs. 79–80.
[51] Tanabe 1982, no. 28, fig. 1, bottom.
[52] Seidl 1991a, 86–87.
[53] Kellner 1991c, 165.
[54] Calmeyer and Seidl 1983, 105, fig, 1.
[55] Calmeyer and Seidl 1983, 109, fig. 2.
[56] Calmeyer and Seidl 1983.
[57] Muscarella 1981, no. 149; Işik 1986, 11, fig. 2.
[58] Işik 1986, 8, fig. 8; van Loon 1991, 29, pl. XXVlla.
[59] Taşyürek 1978, 221.
[60] Originally the plaque was in the Budin collection. It surfaced again in a sales catalogue: Christie's October 25, 2012: Lot 155, as in the Thétis collection.
[61] American Indians are portrayed with and without beards, such as the Maya, Aztec and Moche, the latter favouring moustaches. And they had mirrors and obsidian blades. Beards also exist unevenly among North American Indian tribes, more common in the western United States

shaven as well as bearded faces, with or without moustaches, the latter as in later North Syria.

Belts are the most numerous of Urartian bronze artefacts known, with close to 500 extant, many in fragments; one silver example derives from Altıntepe.[62] Urartian belts have been studied often.[63] Kellner 1991a is a valuable compilation of most excavated and plundered belts then known, but often with *loci* created by the author. He published 449 examples with illustrations, excavated[64] and not. For the latter he usually (not always) states *Fundort unbekannt*, an accurate description, and their modern museum/collector locations are listed.[65]

The great majority have no known provenance beyond the *Kunsthandel* or *Privatbesitz* (Fig. 3), but the excavated evidence suggests that most come from plundered burials.[66] Thus one cannot know if there existed a restricted geographical distribution of particular forms of decoration, especially given the physical difficulties of movement within the State's domain. A good number of belts are preserved intact, some curved for wearing around the waist, and some preserve a loop attachment to secure them. Measurements vary, some narrower than most examples; widths range from *ca*. 4 to more than 17 cm, their lengths a meter or more. Some are inscribed, the earliest to the time of Sarduri II, *ca*. 760–730 BC.[67] A few are undecorated, but many have incised or repoussé cultural or warfare scenes; others have risen dotted or zig-zag patterns.[68]

A belt from Toprakkale has a cast winged griffin attached on the surface.[69] Three unexcavated belts (Fig. 4)[70] have a more elaborate form, one preserving its loop attachment; another has a wing but no head, the third has a head.[71] An eagle plaque in Tokyo may be from a belt.[72]

(information provided to me by Nancy L. Kelkner). Pakistanis and American Amish people have beards but no moustaches.

[62] Özgüç 1983, 37, pl. XVI c–d.

[63] Taşürek 1975; Kendall 1977; Belli and Kellner 1986; Muscarella 1974, no. 133; 1988, 433–38; 2006, 169–70; Curtis 1996; Seidl 2004, 133–58; Konakçi and Baştürk 2009, 177–85.

[64] Kellner 1991a, 87–89.

[65] A good review is Collon 1993.

[66] Muscarella 1974, no. 133; Kellner 1991a, no. 19.

[67] Kellner 1991a, 17; Seidl 2004, 137–40.

[68] *Viz*. Muscarella 1981, 183; Yıldırım 1991; Seidl 2004, 140–59.

[69] Wartke 1990, pl. xx.

[70] Seidl 2004, pl. 57.

[71] Kellner 1991a, nos. 441–443, pl. 87; Seidl 2004, 151, 157.

[72] Tanabe1982, pl. XVIII.

Fig. 3. Bronze belt (courtesy Metropolitan Museum of Art).

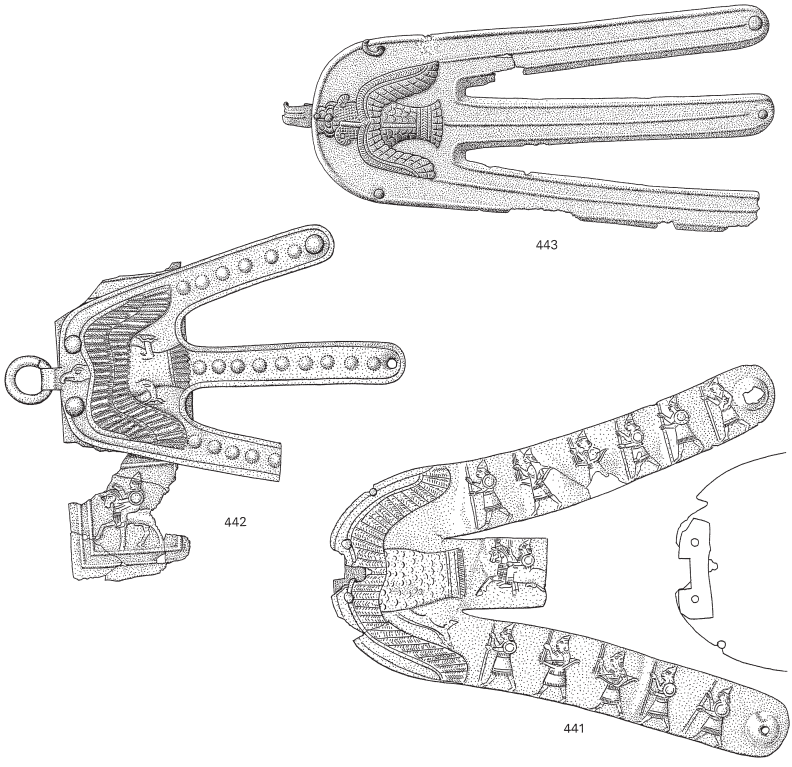


Fig. 4. Belt terminals (after Kellner 1991a, pl. 87).

Kellner[73] published 90 examples decorated with a raised dot border enclosing rows of raised dotted bands; only 11 such belts have been excavated. Kellner claims that 26 are from Giyimli/'Giyimli?'[74], although none were excavated there.[75] To the excavated group add one deriving from Yerevan,[76] and one recovered on a skeleton in a domestic burial from the Outer Town at Ayanis (unpublished). The Ayanis belt has a border of three raised dotted rows, and an enclosed central zone of three units, each with three rows of raised dots, exactly parallelled by a plundered belt.[77] A similarly decorated belt originates from Karmir-Blur.[78] At least four fragmentary belts with bordered raised dots, one with a central bordered zone, were excavated from Burned Building II in the destruction level at Hasanlu IV, destroyed by the Urartians *ca.* 800 BC or later.[79] Two others derive from male burials, determined by weapons present: SK 105, SK 107.[80] Three similar raised dot belts were also recovered in later periods in the southern Caucasus and Urartu. It seems probable that the Hasanlu belts, similar in decoration to those from Urartu and the Caucasus,[81] are the earliest known. Where did such belts originate? And are all non-excavated examples from Urartu?

Other Urartian sites have yielded belts from burials: Çavuştepe, Altıntepe (here folded into a bronze cauldron), Adilcevaz, Tli, Nor Aresh, Yerevan, Ani Pemza, Metsamor and Dedeli,[82] suggesting that most Urartian belts probably came from plundered cemeteries. I visited an Urartian cemetery near Van that had recently been totally plundered, leaving scores of gaping holes; other grave holes are ubiquitous in Urartian territory.

The iconography on belts is a major source of cultural information about male and female activities and clothing, banquets, acrobats, musicians and dance scenes, deity and religious images, *Mischwesen,* rows of animals, warfare scenes, weapons, chariots and cavalry, motifs, and representations of fortresses that assist archaeological reconstructions.[83] Some fortresses are flanked by fish and birds, which might indicate they were close to a lake such as at Van or Urmia, both areas containing Urartian settlements.[84]

[73] Kellner 1991a, 70–77, pls. 73–80.
[74] See also Kellner 1982, 86–88.
[75] Noted by Curtis 1996, 11.
[76] Biscione 1994, 134.
[77] Kellner 1991a, no. 341, p. 79; compare no. 381. For another, see Muscarella 1981, no. 184.
[78] Piotrovsky 1959, 242, fig. 82.
[79] Muscarella 1988, 47–50, nos. 55–59.
[80] Muscarella 1988, 48, no, 54; Rubinson 2012, 393–94, figs. 27.01, 02.
[81] Rubinson 2012.
[82] Compiled with bibliography by de Brestian 2008, 29–30.
[83] Seidl 2004, 133–59; Kellner 1991b; Konakçi and Baştürk 2009, 177–85.
[84] Kellner 1991a, pls. 68–69.

Of the hundreds of belts recorded by Kellner and Seidl only *ca*. 31 were excavated, leaving 418 plundered examples. This includes the 26 examples Kellner identified as from Giyimli, two of which have the characteristic crenelated top.

Since Kellner's publication the number of belts surfacing from both excavations and plunder has increased; Seidl added 15 to the unexcavated group. To the excavated group of 31 we can add *ca*. 11 more examples. Nineteen fragments were recovered in the village of Burmageçit, amounting to about four or five belts.[85] A belt fragment with a battle scene derives from Nakhchivan.[86] From Yerevan Biscione[87] published three belts. Additional unexcavated belts consist of *ca*. 16 examples. One is in the University of Missouri Museum.[88] Curtis[89] added four more in the British Museum, one with two rows of soldiers carrying spears, and small shields covering their shoulders, approaching a towered fortress. Another is in the Malatya Museum; Çavuşoglu[90] adds one each in the Van and the Erzerum Museums. Five more derive from the market: three examples were offered for sale by the dealer H. Mahboubian,[91] and one each from Christie's, London,[92] and Bonhams.[93] Ziffer added four belts in the Moussaieff collection exhibiting females including queens in royal ceremonial scenes, several of them wearing belts, to her bronze.[94]

Ziffer[95] and Seidl[96] cite a belt in Istanbul. Of interest is that one of these belts (Ziffer, no. 4) depicts a pithos that is precisely matched in shape and decoration by an excavated example from Agrab Tepe in north-west Iran, *ca*. 650 BC.[97]

Thus there is a scant total of *ca*. 42 belts that derive from excavations, from more than two dozen tombs and occupation sites,[98] but *ca*. 458 plundered examples: for a total of *ca*. 500 belts presently known.

Ziffer has suggested that narrow belts were worn by females. Indeed, some narrow belts have representations of female queens and attendants who also

[85] Yıldırım 1991.
[86] Potts 2002, 129.
[87] Biscione 1994, 132–34.
[88] de Brestian 2008, 25–28.
[89] Curtis 1996, 122–35.
[90] Çavuşoğlu 2005; 2007.
[91] Art of Ancient Iran, Philip Wilson 1997, nos. 362–364, 365.
[92] October 5 2007, no. 123.
[93] April 29, 2009, no. 183.
[94] Ziffer 2002.
[95] Ziffer 2002, 647.
[96] Seidl 2004, 136.
[97] Muscarella 1973, 64, fig. 25.
[98] Muscarella 2006, 170–71.

wear belts, widths uncertain.[99] Seidl illustrates two small belts depicting females.[100] But narrow belts also show fortresses, *Mischwesen* and animals (which may not have been gendered as female belts).[101] Moreover, female skeletons excavated at Dedeli and Liç[102] wore both wide and narrow belts. One[103] has an abraded scene of a fortress with females involved in a ceremony (the scene seems to have been inaccurately rendered in a drawing).

Helmets obtained from excavations and plunder[104] exist in quantity greater than from any other ancient culture, and are often portrayed in Urartian warfare scenes. Some have inscriptions. The majority is made of hammered bronze; others are of iron consisting of two halves riveted together. All are conical, gently tapering at the top and labelled *Spitzhelme*. There are three distinctive types of decoration on Urartian helmets. One has two or more curved units in relief rising from the base and one unit extending straight down from the top, some of which terminate in animal heads.[105] The second has a geometrical trident form in relief, sometimes with a raised frontal ridge. A third type has an arched projection from the top (*Ruppenhelm*), sometimes terminating in an animal head. A single soldier with a helmet having a semi-circular forward arc is represented on Sargon‘s relief of the Haldi temple, but this helmet is Assyrian,[106] and the soldier seems to have a beard. A number of Urartian helmets display ceremonial and warfare scenes.[107] A plundered example has a much corroded scene and a restored drawing.[108] The helmet worn by a bearded cavalryman on a relief of Tiglath-Pileser III[109] is not Urartian: this and the beard obviate the Urartian identification proposed.

Excavated at Ayanis were six bronze and one iron helmet with leather remains within.[110] One helmet was found within another (Fig. 5); the outer has a religious scene before a sacred tree and an inscription of Rusa II. The inner helmet has a trident, precisely parallelled by a helmet from Karmir-Blur.[111]

[99] Seidl 2004, 138, 141–44; Muscarella 1981, 180–81.
[100] Seidl 2004 136, 141, 144, figs. 97, 99.
[101] Seidl 2004, 145–48.
[102] Kellner 1991a, nos. 63, 102, 103, 291.
[103] Kellner 1991a, no. 282, pl. 71.
[104] *Viz*. Born and Seidl 1995, 54, fig, 43.
[105] Vanden Berghe and De Meyer 1982, 127–33; Born and Seidl 1995, 35, 90–157, 172–77.
[106] Madhloom 1970, pl. XVIII.
[107] *Viz*. Piotrovsky 1967, fig. 30, pls. 16–17; Taşyürek 1974.
[108] Christie’s, London, April 14, 2011, no. 331.
[109] Curtis 2012, 441, fig. 31.24.
[110] Derin and Çilingiroğlui 2001, 163–65, fig. 13.
[111] Piotrovsky 1967, 165, fig. 26.

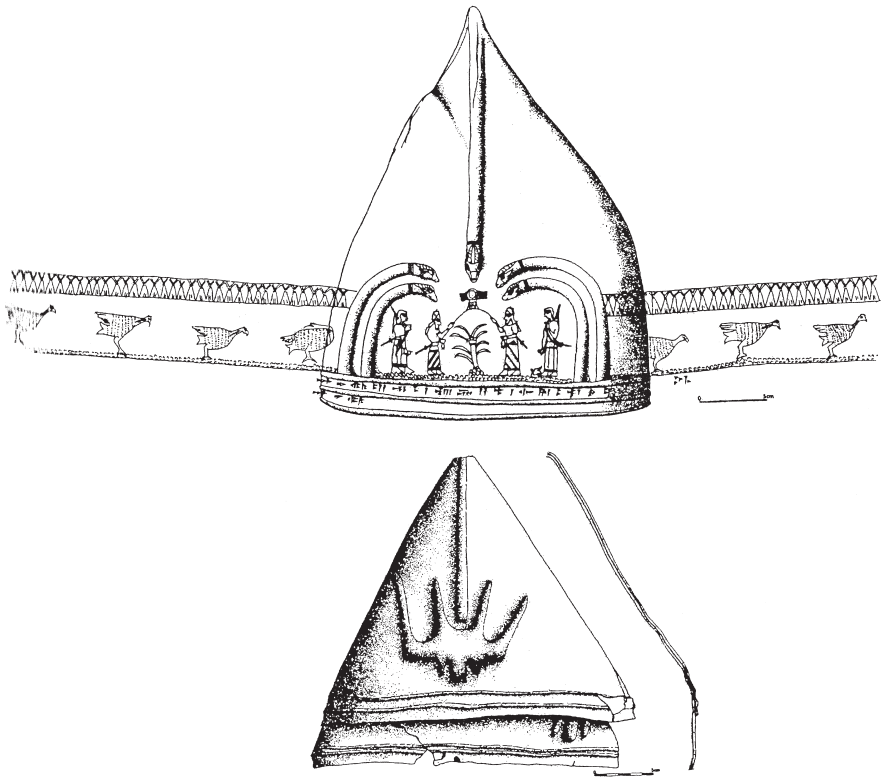


Fig. 5. Helmets from Ayanis (after Çilingorğlu and Salvini 2001).

Born and Seidl[112] show a pectoral illustrating charioteers pursuing cavalry warriors; the former are beardless and wear pointed helmets, while the latter have beards and wear crested helmets (a curved unit across the top). They note the lack of beards and correctly identify the charioteers as Urartians.[113] Another scene on a belt has beardless charioteers and cavalry attacking bearded enemies.[114] Piller,[115] van Loon[116] and Curtis[117] cite crested-helmeted warriors on the 9th-century BC Balawat Gates as beardless Urartians, thus the Urartian attribution – but: but Urartians did not wear crested helmets, although Urartians are mentioned on the Gates.

[112] Seidl 2004, 56–59.
[113] Seidl 2004, 63; Piller 2012, 380–82, fig. 6.03: here with an added beard.
[114] Çavuşoglu 2005, 366.
[115] Piller 2002, 380, fig. 26.01.
[116] Loon 1970, 175.
[117] Curtis 2012, 440–44.

I have argued[118] that to increase the sale prices of plundered plain helmets[119] several depict recently incised scenes inspired by decorated helmets from Karmir-Blur.[120] And the helmet in Born and Seidl[121] is certainly Urartian, not Assyrian as claimed.[122] Their attribution was based on its crudely incised *modern* decoration of a bearded king flanked by one bearded and one beardless deity; also some attendants are bearded, others not.[123]

The above challenges to decorations that appear to be modern additions could likely be proved or disproved by a laboratory examination in a non-collector controlled laboratory. And I believe the laboratory should also examine the scene incised on an additional Urartian helmet.[124]

Arrows: Large numbers of arrows have been recovered from Urartian sites. They occur in three forms: socketed bronze; and solid iron or bronze tanged, or tanged with two vertical wings, a number recovered within quivers.[125] A few tanged examples bear royal names.[126] The bronze socketed examples, bilobate and trilobate, are very widespread.[127] There is much discussion regarding the cultural and chronological background of socketed arrows. They do not occur anywhere before *ca*. 700 BC +/_ and are probably associated at the earliest period with Cimmerians and then the Scythians.[128] By the time of, and surely before, the destruction of Urartu other ethnic polities used them, perhaps even the Urartians, and thus they cannot be considered to be ethnic markers. At Ayanis 244 iron and 150 bronze arrowheads were recovered (Fig. 6),[129] many stuck in the defensive walls, manifestly shot by the attackers. But inasmuch as attackers and attacked forces re-used shot arrow shafts, one cannot assume that bronze socketed arrows occurring in Urartu had always been shot by attackers.[130]

[118] Muscarella 2000, 149–50, nos. 17–19, 184–85, nos. 42, 43, 506–07; and 2006, 163–66.

[119] Maass 1987, 88–90, pl. 2; Calmeyer 1991a, 127, 129, fig. 9; Born and Seidl 1995, 25–27; Seidl 2004, 72.

[120] Piotrovsky 1967, 46, fig. 30, pls. 16–17; Taşyürek 1974.

[121] Born and Seidl 1995, 36–37, back cover.

[122] Also by Maass 1987, 65–71, pls. 2, 3.

[123] Muscarella 2000, 150, no. 19. Seidl (2004, 74–75, fig. 35) is a drawing of bearded and beardless figures in a very Assyrian-like scene; one would have appreciated a photograph.

[124] Born and Seidl 1995, fig. 85.

[125] Derin and Muscarella 2001.

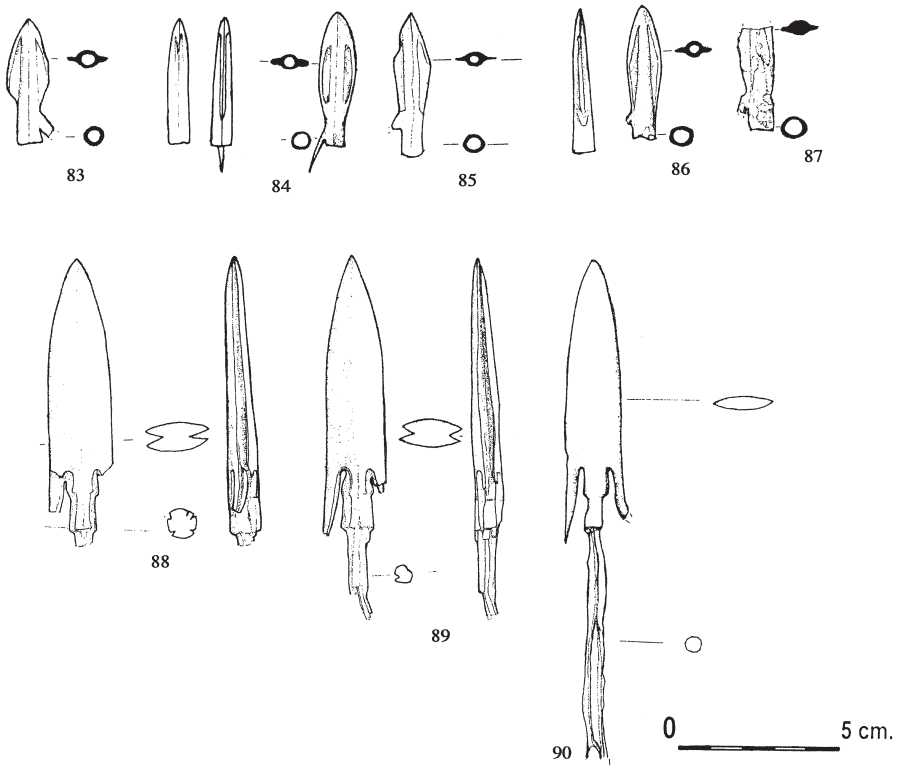
[126] Seidl 2004, 91, fig. 57.

[127] For examples from Anatolia and Iran, see Derin and Muscarella 2001, 192–97.

[128] Derin and Muscarella 2001, 197–200.

[129] In Derin and Muscarella 2001, 190, the caption for the arrows should read: Types of Bronze Arrowheads; that on page 191 should read Types of Iron Arrowheads: see figs, 2–7.

[130] Derin and Muscarella 2001, 202–03.



Bronze Arrows

Fig. 6. Arrows from Ayanis (after Derin and Muscarella 2001).

Spear Heads, primarily of iron, less so of bronze, are numerous. Close to 400 were excavated at Ayanis, only two of bronze, many associated with the temple and the excavators posit that some were dedicated to Haldi.[131] One large example[132] had been called a sword by its excavators, then modified by Çilingiroğlu to be a 'sword/spear' and by Salvini to be a 'weapon', a spear.[133] Seidl[134] agrees with Salvini; Konakçi and Baştürk[135] agree with Çilingiroğlu. Compare the long spear depicted on the Anzaf shield (below), and Sargon's recording of 96 spears of silver and 1514 of bronze at Musasir (lines 378, 393).

[131] Derin and Çilingiroğlu 2001, 155–56, 169–73.
[132] Derin and Çilingiroğlu 2001, 173; length 73 cm.
[133] Çilingiroğlu and Salvini 1999, 56–59.
[134] Seidl 2004, 92, fig. 58, n. 510.
[135] Konakçi and Baştürk 2009, 169–70.

It has been suggested that a huge spear-like head atop the Musasir temple, and those placed before fortresses or held by kings all expressed a religious concept involving spears. This view has been challenged by Calmeyer,[136] who concluded that all these 'spears' were in fact trees. In an extensive investigation of a spear head motif, Roaf accepted the Ayanis example as a spear,[137] then painstakingly listed all known examples of the representational forms and cautiously concluded that 'it is difficult to establish'[138] whether the representations are trees, plants or spears, or crests identifying a temple, suggesting that the form perhaps had several cultural meanings, including plants and trees.

Recently a terracotta plaque excavated at Ayanis in the Outer Town (unpublished) has in relief, unequivocally, a spear head. Whether this indicates that all examples should be interpreted as spear heads, or, with Roaf in mind, it is merely an example of a single spear, remains to be investigated.

Quivers were made of both bronze and iron, 60–70 cm in length, and with two riveted rings for rope to hang at the shoulder; some have repoussé or incised scenes.[139] Urartian quivers have been excavated at a number of sites, 30 with royal inscriptions: Toprakkale, Altıntepe, Anzaf, Karmir-Blur, Cavuştepe, Kayalıdere, Ayanis, Yerevan; and silver examples are mentioned by Sargon at Musasir. Sixty-seven were recovered at Ayanis[140] including bronze quivers containing arrows,[141] in one case 36 arrows; three quivers had iron arrows, and one iron quiver held bronze arrows. Recovered at Kayalıdere were five bronze quivers, one containing two iron spear heads.[142]

At Ayanis some had been hung with shields on pillars, suggesting that they had a religious function.[143] A quiver shows a scene of men carrying various vessels.[144] Another, appearing in an auction gallery,[145] has battle scenes and an inscription of Ishpuini son of Sarduri, late 9th century BC.

Shields have been excavated at a number sites; most are plain, others decorated, and a good number are inscribed, the earliest of Argishti I, *ca*. 785/780/760 BC.

[136] Calmeyer 1979, 312–19; 1991b.
[137] Roaf 2012, 364.
[138] Roaf 2012, 370.
[139] For representations of Assyrian quivers and their placement on troops, see Madhloom 1969, pls. XXXIV–XXXV, XLVI–XLVII, LX.
[140] Derin and Çilingiroğlu 2001, 158–61.
[141] As at Karmir-Blur (Piotrovsky 1970).
[142] Burney 1966, 93–94, pl. XVIII.
[143] Derin and Çilingiroğlu 2001, 158–61, 174–78.
[144] Merhav 1991f, 215, fig. 4; Seidl 2004, 90, fig. 55.
[145] Christie's, London (April 14, 2011, no. 330).

The first known were seven examples excavated at Toprakkale, then 17 at Karmir-Blur; others are from Arin-Berd, two from Anzaf and 18 at Ayanis, two of which bear the name of Rusa II. One from Ayanis (Fig. 7) was recovered next to the temple's wall[146] is decorated with three concentric friezes of confronting lions and bulls. It is parallelled by examples from Karmir-Blur inscribed with the name Rusa II,[147] and from Toprakkale.[148] Projecting from the centre of the Ayanis shield is a snarling lion's head, identical to those cited by Sargon as booty and illustrated on the Musasir temple walls (Fig. 1);[149] note also the head's similarity to the ivory lion head heads from Altıntepe[150] and a bronze lion in the British Museum.[151]

A shield from another Haldi temple at Anzaf (probably once attached to its wall), with an inscription of Ishpuini son of Minua, early 8th century BC, bears a stunning embossed scene.[152] Depicted is a striding beardless king brandishing a very long spear, followed by twelve beardless male deities, each standing on a different animal or *Mischwesen*, eleven armed with various weapons, all attacking fallen bearded enemy troops. Contrary to scholars' conclusions that the leading figure is Haldi, I argue that the spear bearer is a human, Ishpuini: he does not have a horned helmet, nor does he straddle an animal, his clothing is different from that of the deities, and he appears to be wearing armour plates. Thus, the first deity, who straddles a lion, is Haldi. It is difficult to identify deities in representations inasmuch there were about 80 Urartian deities mentioned.[153]

Shields are represented in many battle and parade scenes positioned over the shoulders. Many are small,[154] although the majority of extant shields have diameters of *ca*. 60–100 cm Some are undecorated (like some on the Musasir temple walls), but a good number have animals in concentric circles, at least once with a deity represented. A large number of shields is listed by Sargon: six of gold, twelve of silver, and over 25,000 (an exaggeration?) of bronze.

[146] Derin and Çilingiroğlui 2001, 162–63, figs. 11–12, 19–21.
[147] Piotrovsky 1959, pl. XXXVII; Seidl 2004, 87, fig. 51.
[148] Barnett 1950, pls. IX–X; Merhav 1991d, 139, fig. 22b.
[149] Derin and Çilingiroğlu 2001, 162–63, 179–80, 185–87; Reindell 2001, 387–88; Seidl 2004, 127, fig. 95.
[150] Özgüç 1969, 42–43, 45, 48, figs. 39–42, pl. A.
[151] Hoffmann 1960, 896, fig. 2.
[152] Belli 1999, 34–87; Seidl 2004, 84–86, fig. 48; Bernbeck: 2004, 286–91; Roaf 2012, 364–70.
[153] Salvinii 1995, 184.
[154] Merhav 1991d, 134–37; Konakçi 2009, 177–79, 183, 192.

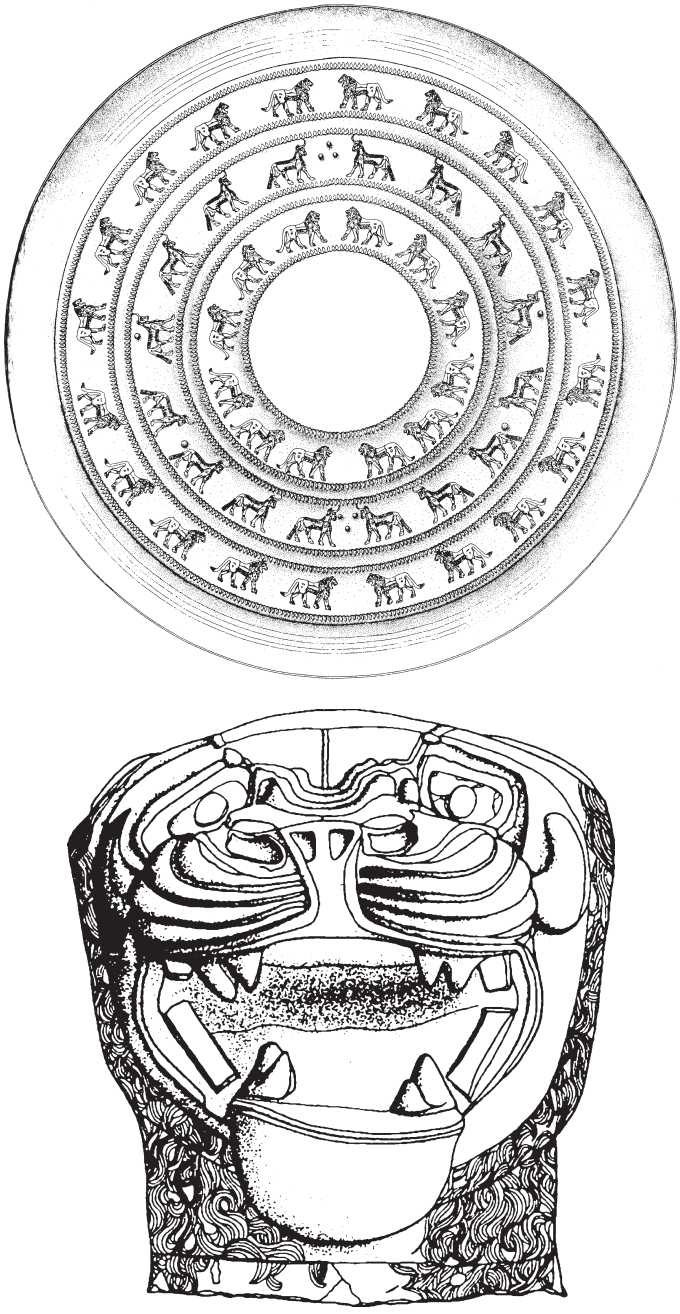


Fig. 7. Shield from Ayanis (after Derin and Çilingorğlu 2001).

Armour Plates: Only one such unit is known**,** excavated at Karmir-Blur.[155] It consists of sections of scales in horizontal rows attached by studs,[156] quite similar to examples excavated at Nimrud.[157] Ishpuini on the Anzaf shield seems to be wearing armour plates, and excavated examples exist at Persepolis and Pasargadae.[158]

Fibulae from Urartu have a very distinct form that distinguishes them from those of other ancient Near Eastern cultures, and occur in Iran, Anatolia, Armenia, and the Caucasus. They do not have a cast one-unit arc with an added pin and spring; rather, the pin is loose, flexibly hinged to the arc (Fig. 8). These are either solid, U-shaped, or flat and bowed in a crescent, and are sometimes decorated with geometric forms.[159] A gold example, excavated in

Fig. 8. Urartian fibulae (top from Adilcevaz) (after Belli 2010).

[155] Barnett 1959, 15–16.
[156] Barnett 1959, 15–16.
[157] Muscarella 1988, 318–29; Curtis 2013, 46–49, pl. X.
[158] Muscarella 1988, no. 321.
[159] Belli 2010, 356–67; Öğün 1979.

a tomb at Adilcevaz, probably a royal burial, is made from several gold strips covered with granulations (Fig. 8 top).[160] Three plundered gold examples offered for sale by Christie's London[161] are mislabelled Phrygian (a cultural gift of the bazaar!).

The Urartian hinged fibula form continued into the Achaemenian era as demonstrated from excavations: in Russian Armenia, at Tsakahovit; in Iran at Tchoga Mish, and at Tomadjan and Ghalekuti near the Caspian Sea.[162] Hinged fibulae may also exist on the reliefs at Persepolis, on the shoulders of two throne bearers.[163]

Another fibula form, distinct from the classical Urartian, was recovered at two Urartian sites: two from Nor Aresh in Armenia,[164] and a similar silver example from a tomb at Kayalıdere.[165] They have a spring cast with an asymmetrical arc with off-set mouldings and a flat catch placed lower than the spring.[166] Are these fibulae a minor Urartian form, or could they have derived from Armenia?

Human Statuettes: From both Sargon's Musasir report and the Haldi temple relief we know that life-sized statues of humans existed, three kings and two guards,[167] but none of deities are. Four bronze Urartian statuettes are known, including: a female in a seated position from Darabey, near Van (Fig. 9 centre), and a beardless male deity from Karmir-Blur (Fig. 9 left).[168] The Karmir-Blur deity holds an axe and a staff that is similar to those carried by deities on the Anzaf shield.[169] The Darabey female (12 cm in height) seems to be a queen who sat on a throne.[170] The third is a bronze statuette of an beardless deity excavated on Samos;[171] and, a fourth example, an unexcavated female, is surely Urartian, as Seidl has noted.[172] And from Toprakkale is a reconstructed lead statuette with ivory parts of a deity.[173]

[160] Öğün 1979, fig. 7; Zahlhaas 1991, 187, fig. 24.
[161] July 6, 1994, no. 463.
[162] Muscarella 1965, 234–40; 1988, 47; Haerinck 1989, 461, 471.
[163] Muscarella 1988, 47.
[164] Barnett 1963, 195, fig. 42; Salvatori 1976, 88, fig. 13.
[165] Burney 1966, 109–10, no. 7; Öğün 1979, 180, fig. 3.
[166] For a plundered example, see Zahlhaas 1991, 197, fig. 56 (fig. 57 is not Urartian).
[167] Salvini 1991, 11.
[168] Piotrovsky 1967, pl. 15; Zahlhaas 1991, 184; van Loon 1991, pl. XXII.
[169] Belli 1999, figs. 22, 23, 27, 30.
[170] *Viz*. Kellner 1991b, 160–61; Merhav 1991g, 246–47, 249; Seidl 1996, 182–83, fig. 1, pl. 54a.
[171] Jantzen 1972, 76, pl. 78.
[172] Seidl 2004, 129, pl. 38a–c.
[173] Mitchell 1983.

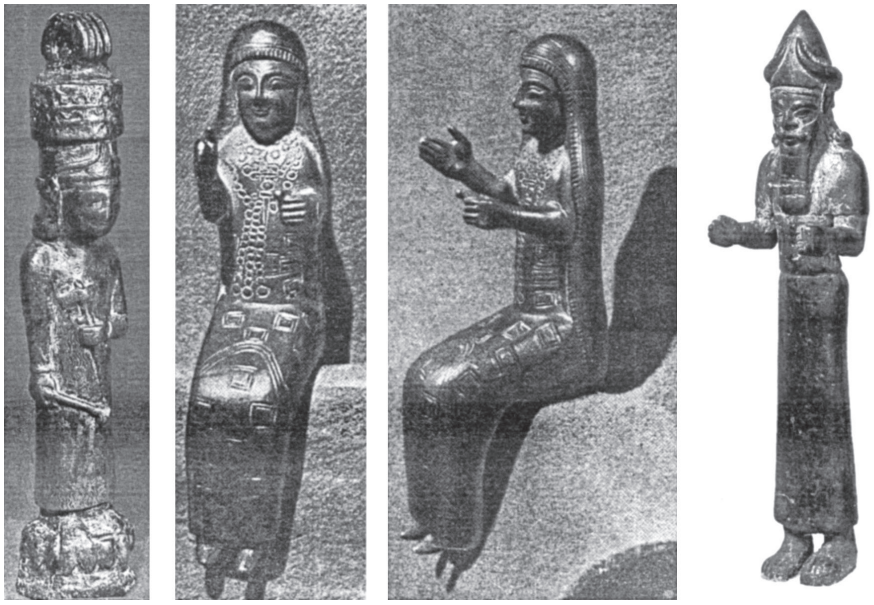


Fig. 9. Statuettes from Karmir-Blur, Darabey, Van area (after van Loon 1991).

There is also a standing bronze beardless male deity from Toprakkale, originally gold plated, 36 cm in height, with a damaged chalkstone head; he wears a pectoral, a decorated belt, and holds a fan (Fig. 10).[174] From the same site derive five hollow-cast and once-gilded statuettes of a male deity striding a recumbent bull (Fig. 11) and horned lions with front bull feet, all now scattered in different museums.[175] Akurgal published as Urartian a female statuette on an unexcavated, non-Urartian candelabrum tripod clasping her hands, and on her head a vessel-like object set on a tripod,[176] and another similar example in Copenhagen.[177] However, these works are not Urartian.

As Piotrovsky correctly stated,[178] three small bronze warrior statuettes[179] are also not Urartian. Nor is Barnett's fig. 7, a bearded statuette wearing a kilt, purchased in Syria and now in the Louvre. A bearded deity 19 cm in height (Fig. 9 right) [180] is probably not Urartian.

[174] Wartke 1990, 31–32, 41–43. pl. I; Merhav 1991e, 171, fig. 4.
[175] Piotrovsky 1967, 31; Muscarella 1988, 429–33.
[176] Akurgal 1968, pls. XXXI–XXXII.
[177] Akurgal 1968, pl. XXXIV.
[178] Piotrovsky 1967, 53.
[179] Barnett 1954, 7, pl. II, no. 2.
[180] Barnett 1950, 21, pl. XVIII, 2 'Ezerum'; Seidl 2004, pl. 37d–f.

Fig. 10. Statuette from Toprakkale (after Wartke 1990).

Animal Statuettes/Figurines were created as fittings for one or two thrones recovered in part from Toprakkale.[181] Preserved are reclining bulls and lions, standing griffins and bulls bearing deities (Fig. 11), all gilt; also a winged bull with a human body and a beardless head. At least two lions and three bulls support standing deities; two reclining lions, one winged, were recovered on top of parts of a footstool.[182] Several throne reconstructions have been proposed[183] (Fig. 12). Two hybrid beardless deity statuettes were also recovered at Toprakkale (Fig. 13), probably from a throne.

A small horse head was recovered at Karmir-Blur.[184] Two matching bronze ibex figurines, their front and rear legs resting on rectangular bands for fastening, exist in the in the University Museum of the University of Pennsylvania (unpublished). There are also the lions on candelabra (below).

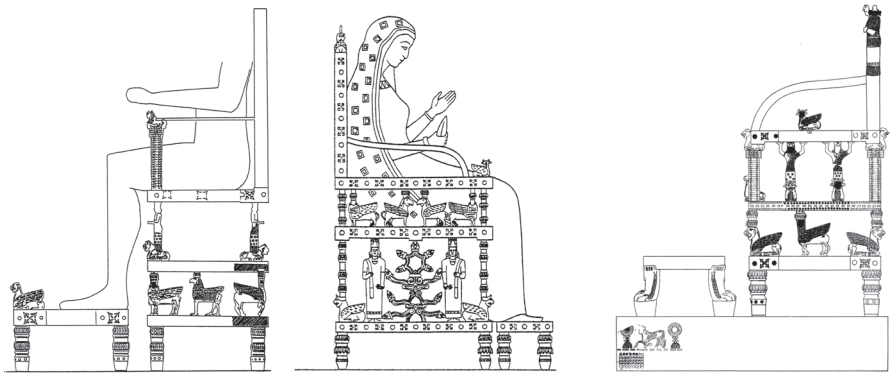
Fig. 11. Throne piece (courtesy Metropolitan Museum of Art).

[181] Barnett 1950, pls. V–VII, XVIII–XXl.

[182] Piotrovskiy 1967, figs. 17–21; pls. 10–11. For their modern history, see Muscarella 1988, 429–33; Wartke 1990, 6–22, pls. 1–4; Merhav 1991h, 278.

[183] Seidl 1996, 185–86, fig. 6; 2004, 62–63. For a similar Assyrian throne, see Vanden Berghe and De Meyer 1982, 103.

[184] Piotrovsky 1967, figs 24, 25.



6. *7.* *8.*

6. Barnett's reconstruction of the throne from Toprakkale.
7. Riemschneider's reconstruction of one throne from Toprakkale.
8. Seidl's tentative reconstruction of the throne from Toprakkale. Drawn by C. Wolff.

Fig. 12. Reconstructions of Toprakkale throne (after Seidl 1996).

Fig. 13. Statuettes from Toprakkale.

Three gold recumbent lions joined together and with frontal holes seem to be Urartian, based on the muzzles, but are not necessarily jewellery.[185] I was shown by a dealer an exactly comparable example, but with four lions (Fig. 18 top).

As for the curator-designated 'Urartian' goat figure placed on a tube exhibited in Jerusalem,[186] it is not Urartian. The *only* parallels for this piece derive from Samos, where seven examples were excavated.[187]

Candelabra consist of a high narrow shaft topped by a disc that once held a lamp or a censor (perhaps mentioned by Sargon at Musasir: line 361), set on a three-legged stand; bronze examples have a hollow shaft. Three bronze and three iron examples were excavated at Toprakkale (Fig. 14),[188] Karmir-Blur and Altıntepe.[189] One of bronze from Toprakkale has a winged sphinx preserved; another from Altıntepe has three recumbent ivory lions on the curved legs base.[190] Isolated lions from candelabra were excavated at Kayalıdere,[191] and a single recumbent lion once attached to a candelabrum was excavated at Patnos. After its excavation the Patnos lion was reunited in spirit with its kidnapped candelabrum, fittingly missing one of its three lions; it has an inscription of Minua, *ca*. 810–780 BC. For 17 years after its acquisition in 1972, the candelabrum was concealed in the Jerusalem Museum,[192] with its third lion replicated.[193] The Patnos lion is the missing lion on the Jerusalem candelabrum orphaned by plunderers and purposefully concealed by collaborating curators.[194] Seidl[195] thinks the Patnos lion *Wahrscheinlichkeit*, *Zugehöriger?* or *wohl Zugehörig* belongs to the candelabrum.

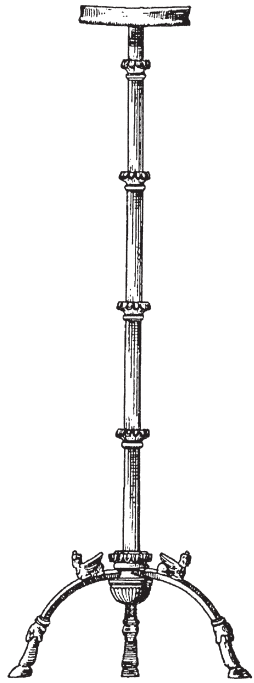


Fig. 14. Candelabrum from Toprakkale (after Seidl 1996).

[185] Zahlhaas 1991, 195, no. 47; Belli 2010, 21.
[186] Merhav 1991h, 279.
[187] Jantzen 1972, 62–63, pl. 58; Muscarella 1977, 34, figs. 4, 15.
[188] Barnett 1950, 25; Hoffmann 1960; Merhav 1991g, 262.
[189] Merhav 1991g, 262, fig. 10.
[190] Özgüç 1969, 45, fig. 43, 83; Merhav 1991g, 263, no. 10; Seidl 1996, 184–85, fig. 5.
[191] Burney 1966, 75–77.
[192] Merhav 1991g, 270; Muscarella 2006, 153–54.
[193] For more detail, see Merhav and Ruder 1991.
[194] Muscarella 2006, 152–55.
[195] Seidl 2004, 15, 25, C. 11, pl. 3.

We also have Sargon's mention of censors in Musasir as from 'the land of Tabal', south-east of Urartu; it is the only reference in the text to foreign-made imports at Musasir: plunder or votive gifts from Tabal?

Equestrian Trappings: A large number of excavated and plundered Urartian bronzes consist of chariot and horse equipment: axle covers, yokes, possible chariot pole terminals, bits (bronze and iron), collars, nose guard frontlets, breastplates, harnesses, collars, blinkers (Fig. 15), and bells (Fig. 16), but no intact chariots have been excavated. Many of the flat pieces bear incised and cast images, some with inscriptions.[196]

Citing Assyrian forms, Seidl[197] considers the bronze curved hollow tube ending in a lion head from Karmir-Blur and a bronze horse head to be yoke terminals.[198] Merhav considers the tube to be from a cauldron.[199]

Fan-shaped discs with five to seven finger-like projections have been cited as yoke pole standards by Merhav,[200] who compares them to such attachments from Samos.[201] This is viable except that the Urartian examples have no tang for insertion.[202]

Fig. 15. Horse cheek piece (courtesy Metropolitan Museum of Art).

[196] *Viz*. Seidl 1991a; 1991c. A very good catalogue with discussion, bibliography, photographs and drawings of these objects is Merhav 1991a (see Merhav 1991b; 1991c; Seidl 1991a; 2004, 92–112, figs. 59–84).

[197] Seidl 2004, 100, fig. 72.

[198] Piotrovsky 1967, 53, pls. 24–25.

[199] Merhav 1991f, 233–34.

[200] Merhav 1991b, 61, 74–75; Seidl 2004, 100–01, pls. 22–23.

[201] Merhav 1991b, 57, fig. 4.

[202] For frontlets of various forms and breastplates and blinkers, some decorated with religious scenes, see Seidl 1991a, 79–92.

Fig. 16. Bell (courtesy Metropolitan Museum of Art).

One category perhaps to be considered within the equestrian corpus warrants attention, as there is disagreement regarding function: horse frontlets, blinkers, or arm guards. These are flat plaques *ca*. 15–18 cm in length with a flat top, curved base and two curved horizontal projections above its centre, and perforations for attachment. Some are plain, others have representations; some are inscribed.[203] Only two examples have been excavated, at Karmir-Blur[204] and Giyimli.[205] Belli labels them *At-alinliği*,[206] horse frontlets, an interpretation shared by Özgen,[207] who see them as horse blinkers. Seidl labels them 'Arm Guards (?)'.[208] As parallel evidence for her interpretation, she provides illustrations of Assyrian warriors wearing arm guards that are clearly

[203] Seidl 1991b; 2004, 79–84.
[204] Sevin 1978, 115, fig. 3.
[205] Seidl 2004, 80, fig. 41.
[206] Belli 1977, 193, 195, pls. V, VI.
[207] Özgen 1984, figs. 8, 9, 49; Sevin 1978, 125 and fig. 6.
[208] Seidl 1991b, 116–22; Seidl 2004, 79–83.

slipped closely onto the left forearm; however, they are nothing like those under review here. Seidl[209] also cites a small curved fragment from Marlik as from an arm guard, I think wrongly.

Two joining fragments with a raised face, one excavated at Giyimli, were incorrectly labelled horse frontlets by Erzen.[210] Other Giyimli plaques bear the same face[211] and are labelled votive plaques.

Horse bits of several forms can be identified as Urartian by inscriptions or from excavation.[212] The bits are usually curved and have either two or three hole loops for attachment, connected by a flexible mouth/cheek piece;[213] some cast with the bit.[214] Another group derives from Altıntepe,[215] with the mouth and cheek pieces cast together with protomes of a bull, horse, and an eagle.

Tubular objects closed at one end, 14–20 cm in length, are usually considered to be draught pole terminals, but this interpretation is uncertain. They sometimes have a religious scene incised at the top disc, and inscriptions demonstrate that they are Urartian.[216]

Wall Nails: Merhav[217] and Seidl[218] labelled a group of bronze rods with a bulbous head, 9–24 cm in length, as chariot linchpins, disagreeing with Barnett,[219] who labelled them nails: but he was correct. They have been excavated at Toprakkale,[220] Kayalıdere[221] and Ayanis, where 90 bronze and iron examples were recovered attached to or near wooden beams in the temple area. Four have an iron tang and a bronze head, 42 cm in length, each inscribed with the name of Rusa ll. Some exhibit signs of having been hammered, and Çilingiroğlu has plausibly suggested that they probably held shields on the temple's walls, citing as evidence the Haldi temple at Musasir (Fig. 1).[222]

[209] Seidl 2004, 80, fig. 42.
[210] Erzen 1974, figs. 38, 39.
[211] Kellner 1991d, nos. 10, 13, 14; Seidl 1991b, 116; 2004, 169, fig. 119b.
[212] Özgen 1979, 122–28, figs. 12–16.
[213] Seidl 1991a, 82; Seidl 2004, 105, fig. 76.
[214] Piotrovsky 1959, 156, fig. 23, from Karmir-Blur; Seidl 2004, 103–05, fig. 77.
[215] Özgüç 1989.
[216] Merhav 1991b, 55–56, 72–74; Tanabe 1982, pls. VIII–XIII.
[217] Merhav 1991b, 61, 66–67, figs. 5, 8, 13.
[218] Seidl 2004, 119.
[219] Barnett 1954, 6, fig. 5.
[220] Wartke 1990, pl. XXXV.
[221] Burney 1966, 95, fig. 19, labelled nails.
[222] Sağlamtimur *et al.* 1991, 219–21, figs. 1, 2, pls. I–II.

Bells of different forms have been excavated in the Urartian homeland, a number inscribed with 8th-century dates (Fig. 16).[223] I add two deriving from Yerevan in Armenia, one with a row of apertures, as with examples from Karmir-Blur, and the other plain.[224] One form is faceted into eight sides with one or two rows of vertical apertures, or one aperture. Another form is round and plain, or with a side slit; all are cast with a loop handle,[225] as are a number of South Caucasian bells.[226] Seidl's unexcavated bell no. 56 has a horse-shaped aperture, and an iron clapper protruding below the bell's border:[227] is it Urartian? At Bastam three bells with triangular apertures derive from a post-Urartian grave.[228] Bells, as well as apparent tassels,[229] were certainly placed on horses' necks, but very few examples of Urartian horses are represented wearing them.[230] Some bells from Nimrud parallel those from Urartu, including one with a slit.[231] In Assyria it is clear that bells were also employed for other purposes, as decorations, in ceremonies, etc.[232]

An Urartian bell was excavated at Samos.[233] This bell is one of two Urartian artefacts recovered in the West.

Giyimli Plaques: An estimated 2000–3000 small decorated bronze plaques,[234] some certainly Urartian productions, others non-descript, began to appear on the antiquities market in 1971.[235] Turkish authorities claim they were removed by workers building a mosque at Giyimli in south-eastern Turkey.[236] Subsequent excavations recovered hundreds of plaques of various forms, a few related to the plundered corpus. One excavated fragment joined another in a German Museum.[237] The unexcavated plaques (*viz*. Fig. 17)[238] are small, rectangular,

[223] Belli 1977, 198–206; Muscarella 1988, 427–28; Seidl 2004, 115–16.
[224] Biscione 1994, 123, fig. 7.
[225] Muscarella 1978, fig. 3; Vanden Berghe and De Meyer 1982, 149–51; Seidl 1991a, 80, 95.
[226] Muscarella 1988, 442–44; Curtis 2013, 90.
[227] Seidl 1991a.
[228] Kroll 1979, 168, 180, fig. 18, no. 1.
[229] *Viz*. Madhloom 1970, pls. II–IV, VI–VIII, etc.
[230] *Viz*. Özgen 1983, 127–28, figs. 10, 12;1984, 154, fig. 49. For Assyrian bells at the horse's neck, see Madhloom 1969, pl. VIII, no. 10; Merhav 1991b, 52; Curtis 2012, 441. For Achaemenian, see Spear 1978, figs. 34, 35, 38.
[231] Curtis 2013, pl. LXXVI.
[232] Curtis 2013, 98–99; see also Spear 1978, pls. 7, 8, figs. 126–138, 219–220.
[233] Jantzen 1972, pl. 80, B474; Muscarella 1978, 63–66, fig. 1, n. 3; 1988, 427–28.
[234] Belli 2001, 191.
[235] *Viz*. Sotheby's, London, August 13, 1975, 24–56.
[236] Erzen 1974, figs. 38–39; Taşyürek 1978; Kellner 1982, 79–81; Seidl 2004, 169–98, is a good summary.
[237] Seidl 2004, 16, fig. 4.
[238] And van Loon 1991, pl. XXVIII.

Fig. 17. Giyimli plaque (courtesy Van Museum).

square or oval, and have moulded or incised decorations consisting of deities standing on lions or bulls, along with worshippers, banquet scenes and a number of females. Many plaques have distinctive crenellated tops, and one or two bear an inscription; some have holes at the border for attachment (to the temple's walls?). They vary in quality, some being poorly executed, others outstanding**.** The plaques are certainly Urartian productions, indicated by the iconography and lack of a beard on most males, and some are parallelled by similar pieces from Toprakkale and Karmir-Blur.

Their function appears to have been religious and votive, perhaps dedications to a deity's temple (now buried below the mosque), but it remains unclear if the scenes, a major source of religious representations, represent State or local religious practices.[239] Worshipping of deities and banquet scenes are frequent.[240] An example of the former, with a hieroglyphic inscription (not deciphered), has a deity on a lion holding a square object, perhaps a standard,

[239] Salvini 1995, 191.

[240] Tanabe 1982, pls. XXXVI–XXXVIII, XL–XLIII, XLIII–L; Vanden Berghe and De Meyer 1982, 171–77; Seidl 2004, pls. 60–62.

a typical Giyimli motif. Before him is a female who seems to be offering a goat (another typical motif (Fig. 17).[241] The deity wears a flat-topped crown.[242] But a number differ, with a crown peculiar to Urartu: carinated, slanting outward below a curved top often topped with a disc.[243] Belli says some male faces have beards,[244] which I do not see.

Goats and ibexes also appear on the plaques in scenes that do not seem to represent offerings, but as connected to certain deities.[245] A distinctive plaque shows two females wearing earrings and holding vessels, a fan and necklaces approaching a deity with legs folded on a throne, also wearing earrings, all situated before a crenelated fortress.[246]

Jewellery is abundant comprising pins, bracelets, earrings, hair spirals, torques, and medallions, made of bronze, gold, and silver.[247] Relatively few items have been excavated, the majority available resulting from plunder. Of the former, some are probably from royal tombs, *viz*. Karagünduz, a rare instance of a fully unplundered cemetery from Urartu. Here ten chamber tombs with multiple burials were excavated, thanks to the skill (and luck) of Veil Sevin.[248]

Pins are a common jewellery component.[249] The majority have elaborate tops consisting of birds and animals, sphinxes and geometric forms, most less than 10 cm in length. Only about 15 pins of these forms have been excavated: six at Karagünduz,[250] one of gold from Karmir-Blur,[251] two silver examples and one of bronze from Adilcevaz[252] two of bronze from Iğdır,[253] one of bronze from Nor Aresh,[254] another from Kayalıdere, and an ivory example with a sphinx top from Toprakkale.[255] At Altıntepe a burial revealed a skeleton preserving *in situ* a pin at the chest and one at the neck, marking their clasping

[241] van Loon 1991, pl. XXVIIIc; Seidl 2004, pl. 60b.
[242] *Viz*. Seidl 2004, 174, fig. 121, pls. 59, 60a, b.
[243] Seidl 2004, 180–83, pls. 60a, b-63i
[244] Belli 2001, 193.
[245] Vanden Berghe and De Meyer 1982, 174, 175, 177.
[246] Taşürek 1980, 212. The attire of the deity in Kellner 1991a, 291 and Taşyürek 1987, fig. 1, is similar to that of the deities on the Anzaf shield.
[247] Belli 2012 is a good source for *loci* and illustrations; also Merhav 1991e; Kellner 1991b; Kohlmeyer 1991; Zaalhaas 1991; and Çavuşoglu 2011.
[248] Sevin and Kavalla 1996.
[249] Belli 2010, 327–49.
[250] Sevin and Kavakli 1996, 37, 39.
[251] Piotrovsky 1967, 55, fig. 37.
[252] Öğün 1982, fig. 27a, b.
[253] Barnett 1963, 178, fig, 32, nos. 1, 2.
[254] Barnett 1963, 195, fig. 43.
[255] Burney 1966, fig. 21, no. 13; Zahlhaas 1991, 185, fig. 22.

positions; also earrings, a necklace of beads and, rarely, finger rings.[256] Compare to this list the many plundered examples; Merhav 1994 records over 250 examples, only 18 of which were excavated. Of the full corpus 26 are made of gold and silver. Zahlhaas[257] reports that two gold examples 'were reportedly' (by an antiquities dealer) found together in a burial. Years ago an antiquity dealer showed me many gold earrings, pins[258] and necklaces (Fig. 18); two of the pins are quite similar to those illustrated by Zahlhaas,[259] and on the Darabey female statuette.[260] Were they female gendered? As with fibulae, most of the pins were used to fasten clothing, but one wonders if some may also have had symbolic/religious functions.

Earrings are also common, excavated at Patnos, Ayanis, Yoncatepe and Karagündüz,[261] sometimes portrayed as worn by females.[262] Some are gold, a few granulated: three from Karmir-Blur,[263] six from Patnos[264] and two from Altıntepe.[265] A possible female face on a Giyimli plaque wears earrings.[266]

Necklaces made of agate, carnelian, glass, shell, and some of bronze have been recovered on the necks of skeletons at Karagündüz;[267] several stone examples derive from Karmir-Blur,[268] Yerevan[269] and Altıntepe.[270] A necklace is worn by a female on the Darabey statuette, and two probable females carry them on a Giyimli plaque, perhaps indicating that necklaces were female gendered.[271]

Medallions of silver and gold are small discs, sometimes with a loop, decorated with religious or various representation scenes, *viz*. an example excavated at Toprakkale depicting a seated female, possibly a queen, as Kellner suggests.[272]

[256] Belli 2001, 182.
[257] Zahlhaas 1991, 185, nos. 41–42.
[258] Similar to Belli 2012, 343.
[259] Belli 2012, 190, nos. 20–21.
[260] Belli 2012, 184.
[261] Belli 2010, 201, 211–16, 239, 241.
[262] Belli 2010, 200, 223.
[263] Piotrovsky 1970, pls. 82, 83; Zahlhaas 1991, 189.
[264] Belli 2010, 210–12, 215, of which four are paired.
[265] Another gold pair 'from the trade' is Zahlhaas 1991, 188, 194, no. 43. For a good selection of Urartian earrings, see Belli 2010, 200–41.
[266] Kellner 1991d, 296, no. 9: there called a male.
[267] Sevin and Kavakli 1996, 31–33; Belli 2012, 399.
[268] Piotrovsky 1959, 188, fig. 48.
[269] Biscione 1994, 129–31; Çavuşoglu 2011, 251, 256–57.
[270] Özgüç 1983, pl. XIV and above.
[271] Taşürek 1980, pl. VI.
[272] Kellner 1991c, 164, fig. 1. A comparable silver medallion in the Metropolitan Museum is very similar to Merhav 1991, 167, fig. 3 (Fig. 19).

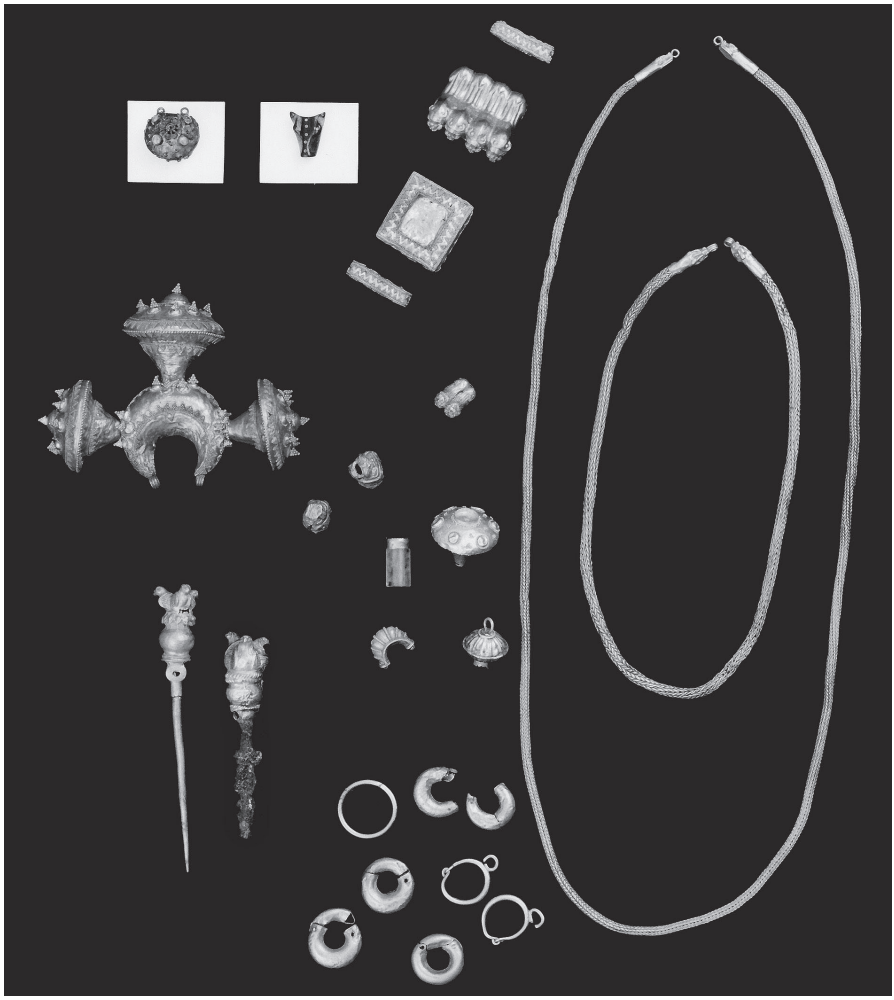


Fig. 18. Gold jewellery (Muscarella files).

Three crude silver examples derive from Karmir-Blur,[273] and apparently one of bronze comes from Çavuştepe.[274] A number of examples also depict a male deity (possibly Haldi) standing on a lion and facing a male worshipper.[275] Similar medallions with this type of scene have been excavated at Zincirli.[276]

[273] Piotrovsky 1970, pls. 85–87.
[274] Wartke 1990, 144, n. 1.
[275] Kellner 1980, fig. 1, pl. 18.
[276] Andrae 1943, pl. 44, a–f.

A form of necklace with its ends open, not joined, with diameters of 10–14 cm are torques. A few examples with coiled ends terminating in loops are known from excavations, one from Toprakkale and two from Bastam, all of iron.[277] Others, of bronze, were noted by Belli.[278] A curved silver tang 22 cm in length with a gilded lion terminal (14 cm) from Karmir-Blur is described by Piotrovsky[279] as part of a neck ornament, but because of the lack of a requisite curve I doubt it.

Armlets and bracelets, distinguished by their diameters, are also common,[280] although very few are excavated. Gold examples derive from Karmir-Blur,[281] and bronze examples from Iğdır, Nor Aresh and Karagündüz.[282] Most have animal or snake-head terminals, similar to those known from Assyria and Iran.[283] A remarkable plundered granulated gold object (5.7 × 5 cm) published by Zahlhaas[284] is called an 'armlet or choker' but is neither as its narrowness and seven tubes demonstrate.[285] That it is Urartian is documented by several small artefacts from Altıntepe called 'spacer beads' with basically the same granulated decoration.[286]

Earrings and bracelets cannot be exclusively gendered as female artefacts, inasmuch as Assyrian men wore them,[287] and bracelets were worn by males and females, as documented from excavations, noted by Kohlmeyer.[288] A possible female face on a Giyimli plaque wears earrings.[289]

Pectorals manufactured of gold, silver and bronze[290] were worn at the neck by male Urartian figures.[291] They are worn by deities and composite figures from Toprakkale,[292] and by one human? (Fig. 10; the headdress is missing). Examples known are *ca.* 15–25 cm, a few smaller,[293] and were decorated with genre, religious and battle scenes: a spectacular silver example is in the MIHO

[277] Wartke 1990, 1118–19, fig. 27.9, pl. XXXVII.
[278] Belli 2010, 296–303.
[279] Piotrovsky 1967, 55–56, fig. 36; 1970, fig. 81.
[280] Kohlmeyer 1991.
[281] Piotrovsky 1970, pl. 79; Kohlmeyer 1991, 178, fig. 19.
[282] Sevin and Kavakli 1996, 31.
[283] Belli 2010, 258–89.
[284] Zahlhaas 1991, 195, no. 45.
[285] Belli 2010, 157.
[286] Özgüç 1983, 34, pl. XIIa–c; Belli 2010, 167.
[287] Madhloom 1970, pls. XXXII–XXXV; Merhav 1991e, 171, 174, figs. 4, 10a.
[288] Kohlmeyer 1991, 178.
[289] Kellner 1991d, 296, no. 9: there called a male.
[290] Kellner 1977.
[291] Kellner 1991c, 164–65; Merhav 199b, 171, 173; for Assyrian usage, see p. 174; Seidl 2004, 110–13.
[292] Merhav 1991e, 173, fig. 13.
[293] Wartke 1990, no. 367.

Museum, Japan.[294] Most are unexcavated, but two were: a silver example from Toprakkale,[295] and a bronze example from Nor Aresh.[296] One plundered example is of gold.[297]

Furniture: Bronze fittings consisting primarily of cast legs of chairs, footstools, and arm supports are also known from preserved wooden furniture and representations of thrones. The most prominent examples have been excavated at Toprakkale (see above), others at Altıntepe,[298] and Kayalıdere.[299] Some have close parallels with Assyrian examples.[300] Preserved wooden furniture, including a table with bronze footings, has also survived from Urartian excavations.[301]

VESSELS: Excavated and plundered metal vessels of bronze, iron, and silver (also mentioned by Sargon at Musasir) comprise plain or fluted bowls, plates, situlae/buckets, and jugs, several matched by ceramic examples,[302] and some with inscriptions).[303] About eight silver vessels derive from excavations, and nine more from the 'trade' (Ebnöther collection). They were first published by Salvini;[304] Seidl labels them a *Grabfunde*,[305] but not informing us who found them.[306] One sensational example is a magnificent silver bucket with a gilded relief showing bearded deities flanking sacred trees.[307] I suggest this bucket is not certainly Urartian, and may be Assyrian: a close parallel for the decoration exists on the bucket carried by an Assyrian deity.[308] However, there are other unexcavated buckets, almost identical in shape and handles to bucket no. 22, one in the Van Museum and two others in the Ebnöther collection, one inscribed by Ishpuini, who states that he gifted it to Inushpua.[309]

[294] Not Munich as listed by Kellner 1991c, 168.
[295] Kellner 1991c, 165, fig. 2.
[296] Salvatori 1976, 85, fig. 4; Merhav 1991e, 172, fig. 6.
[297] Kellner 1991c, 165, fig. 3. See also Kellner 1977.
[298] Özguç 1969, 21, fig. 23, 68, pls. XIX-XXIV.
[299] Wartke 1990, 36–37, pls. III–IV; Burney 1966, pls. XIX–XXI; Curtis 2012, 433–35.
[300] Merhav 1991g, 250–52, figs. 2.1–3, Seidl 1996, 183–85, figs. 1, 3.1, 4–5; Curtis 2013, pl. XLIV.
[301] Simpson 1995, 1666–67.
[302] *Viz*. Merhav 1991f, 212, 217.
[303] Merhav 1991f, 200–25; Tanabe 1982, 68–69, pls. IV–VI.
[304] Salvini 1980, 182–83.
[305] Seidl 2004, 170.
[306] Also Merhav 1991f, 220–25.
[307] Merhav 1991f, no. 22.
[308] Merhav 1991e, 174, fig. 10a.
[309] Merhav 1991f, 216, fig. 5.3; 224, nos. 25, 26.

Fig. 19. Gold medallion (courtesy Metropolitan Museum of Art).

Two bronze bowls from Karmir-Blur have inscriptions of Sarduri, to Seidl[310] Sarduri I or III. And a variety of vessels are often shown carried or resting on tables on Urartian metal objects.[311] An unexcavated iron askos made of several joined units may be Urartian.[312]

Cauldrons with Bull's Head Attachments are known from five Urartian sites. Altıntepe has produced the only excavated example of a cauldron recovered intact with four bull's head attachments. From Karmir-Blur are two small bull's head attachments; two isolated heads, from two cauldrons are from Toprakkale; one is from Alishar (Fig. 20), and four are from Guschi on the north-western shore of Lake Urmia in Iran.[313] Two other bull's heads have

[310] Seidl 2004, 45.
[311] Merhav 1991f, 227; 1991g, 253.
[312] Merhav 1991f, 210, 212, nos. 12, 13; 1991j, 328.
[313] Hanfmann 1956, 205–09; Piotrovsky 1967, 37–40, figs. 22–26, 59; Merhav 1991, 241f, no. 36.

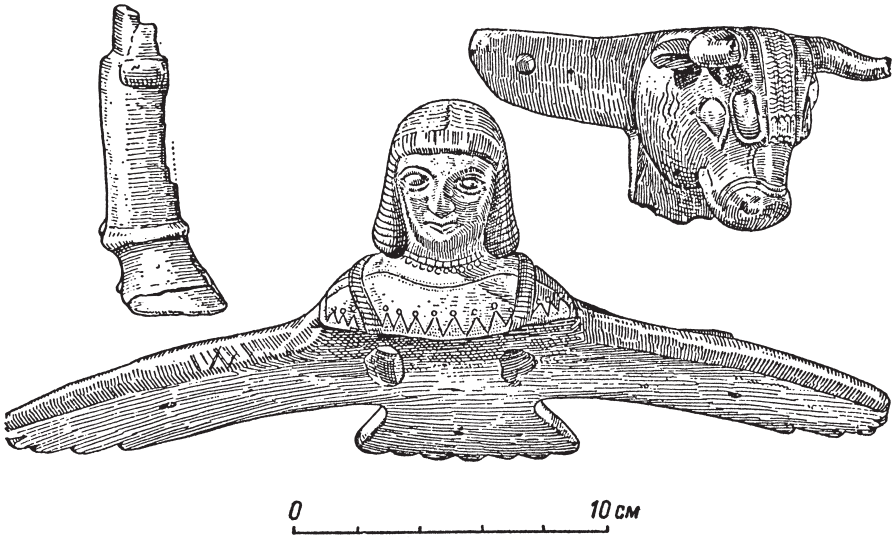


Fig. 20. Bull and siren protomes from Alishar (after Piotrovsky 1967).

been attributed to Van.[314] Plundered examples exist on cauldrons or as isolated heads.[315] I know of only one example where a cauldron with bull's attachments is depicted, with two women drawing the liquid.[316] Cauldrons were not used for cooking.[317]

Bull's head cauldron attachments of different style have been excavated at Gordion (four pairs on four cauldrons), and in northern Syria.[318] Also are a few terracotta examples, some excavated[319] and others unexcavated but apparently Urartian.[320]

Cauldrons with Winged Siren Attachments, both of males – identified by their beards (but no moustache) and females, sometimes together on the rim of the same cauldron, are known from excavations at many sites, in Greece, Italy

[314] Piotrovsky 1967, 38, fig. 22.

[315] Tanabe 1982, pls. I–II; Merhav 1991, 236, 238, 241, no. 35 (nos. 37 and 38 are not Urartian). Three unpublished bull's head cauldron attachments, each distinct, and a fragmented cauldron with three holes for an attachment exist in the University Museum of the University of Pennsylvania.

[316] Seidl 2004, 141, fig. 99; see also Merhav 1991f, 226–27.

[317] As claimed by Azarpay 1968, 56, and challenged by van Loon 1970, 175.

[318] Muscarella 1992, 26.

[319] Piotrovsky 1967, pl. 26.

[320] *Viz*. Merhav 1991f, 239.

and Anatolia. The evidence for the latter are those from Gordion, two cauldrons each with four attachments,[321] three sirens reported in the 19th century to have come from Armenia and Alishar, and two others are in the Istanbul Museum claimed to have derived from Van[322] but in fact purchased. Collectively we have approximately eleven Anatolian examples.

A plundered bucket now in Jerusalem has three winged bearded and moustached deities at its rim, thereby eliminating them as Urartian; the sketched scene at the rim indicates that it may be Assyrian.[323]

The Gordion siren cauldrons as well as plundered examples have been attributed by some scholars and museum curators to Urartu, as though all oriental siren attachments (whether with male or female heads) were Urartian productions exported to the West.[324] None are Urartian: manifest because Urartians did not have beards without moustaches, and none have been excavated in Urartu. But inasmuch as some appear to have been recovered in Urartian territory, their occurrence there could be explained as a result of trade, gifting, or booty. But to declare all siren bearing cauldrons as Urartian productions creates a distorted history of Urartian cultural contacts with Phrygia, Assyria, North Syria and Greece. Cauldrons with siren attachments probably originated in North Syria.[325] For a manifest Urartian artefact exported West see Bells above. What surely seems to be an attachment for a cauldron is a curved hollow tube with a lion head and an inscription of Sarduri son of Argishti, *ca*. 760–730 BC.[326]

Mirrors made of metal are known from many ancient cultures: in Anatolia, the Hittites Phrygia at Gordion from the post-destruction level (*ca*. 700 BC); Sardis; in Iran at Sialk and Marlik; in Mesopotamia, and Egypt; in China; North Syria; Greece; Etruria.[327] But not a single mirror has been excavated at any Urartian site, nor do they appear in any of the hundreds of extant representations. Urartians for some cultural reason unknown to us do not seem to have used mirrors.

[321] Akurgal 1968, pls. I, II.

[322] Piotrovsky 1967, 82, 83, 87, figs. 59, 62.

[323] Muscarella 1981, 269–70. For examples of imports and locally made siren cauldrons from the Greek sphere, see Muscarella 1992, 16–24.

[324] *Viz*. Akurgal 1968, 21–48; Merhav 1991f, 229–34, 236–38, 241–43.

[325] For summaries of these issues, see Muscarella 1992, 16–24; 2006, 158–59; Salvini 1995, 176–78.

[326] Piotrovsky 1967, 43–44; 1968, 38.

[327] For a review of mirrors in antiquity, see the articles by P. Albenda, R. Bianchi, L. Congdon, N. de Grummond, A. Juliano and K. Rubinson in *SOURCE* IV.2–3 (1983), 1–50.

Notwithstanding this archaeological reality, two unexcavated, *non*-Urartian style bronze mirrors have been declared to be Urartian, one in the British Museum, the other in the Boston Museum of Fine Arts. A scholar (one of the best in Urartian language and history) referred to the former example as the 'first Urartian mirror known', and the Boston Museum's as the second now known.[328]

Ladles: As with mirrors, no ladles have been excavated at any Urartian site (although they were used in Assyria and Phrygia). Nevertheless, a bronze ladle with a nude female handle excavated in Israel was baptised (appropriately in Jerusalem) as Urartian by some scholars and declared to be an import: a fabrication by archaeologists treated as a unique occurrence.[329] I know of none from the 1st millennium BC in the ancient Near East.

I end here realising that additional categories and relevant material exist, but believe that I have provided enough background information for further research and discussions.

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[328] Muscarella 2006, 167.

[329] Muscarella 2006, 166–67.

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URARTIAN FOREIGN POLICY: THE SOUTH

Karen RADNER

Abstract

This chapter deals with Urartu's relationship with its southern neighbour: the Assyrian empire, by far its most powerful rival. After briefly presenting the sources, we discuss (A) the period from the 860s to 820 BC when Urartian state expansion is countered by Assyrian incursions into its territory; (B) the poorly attested period from the 810s to 782 BC when Urartu and Assyria seem to have avoided direct confrontation with each other; (C) the period from 781 to 744 BC when Urartu offensively encroached on the Assyrian sphere of interest in south-western Anatolia and north-western Iran; (D) the period from 743 to 735 BC when Assyria reasserted its military dominance; (E) the period from 734 to 708 BC when Urartu lost its influence in south-western Anatolia and north-western Iran; (F) the entente between Urartu and Assyria from 707 to the 660s BC; and finally (G) the period of the 650s and 640s when Urartu had to acknowledge and accept Assyrian sovereignty.

To the south of Urartu lie the territories controlled by the Assyrian empire, by far its most powerful rival, and this chapter will therefore deal with Urartu's relationship with Assyria. Centred on northern Iraq, this state dominated the political landscape of the Middle East from the 9th century BC onwards and controlled regions between the eastern Mediterranean coast and Central Iran either directly (as provinces with centrally appointed governors) or indirectly (as client states headed by local rulers bound by treaty to their Assyrian overlord). Although the centres Turushpa and Nineveh, the Assyrian capital of the 7th century BC, were situated at a distance of only about 240 km from each other as the crow flies, the soaring peaks of the Taurus main ridge, with altitudes in excess of 3000 m, provided a bulwark between them.

For most of their shared history, long-term relations between Urartu and Assyria were openly hostile and punctuated by encounters on the battlefield, as both states sought to expand into the same strategically and economically important regions along the Taurus and Zagros mountain ranges. In between, there were periods of calm: not as the result of peace treaties but due to mutual avoidance after inconclusive yet costly wars, as the two rivals were remarkably evenly matched in their offensive and defensive power. After one such period of avoidance during the first half of the 7th century, we find the relationship

markedly changed, for reasons not explicitly documented in the available sources, and the two states were now engaged in direct diplomatic contact. At some point between 646 and 642 BC, Urartu even accepted Assyria as its sovereign power and entered into a client relationship.

The Sources and the Chronological Framework of Relations with Assyria

Textual sources form the backbone for any study of the political relationship between Urartu and the Assyrian empire. Texts relevant to our topic are relatively numerous, but very unevenly distributed. Generally speaking, the Assyrian material is not only much more numerous but also far more diverse in nature than the Urartian sources. The relevant Urartian and Assyrian texts can be divided into two groups: official inscriptions and archival materials, usually from the context of state administration.

The relevant official accounts preserved in the royal inscriptions cover the period from the mid-9th to the 7th century in Assyria (from the reign of Assurnasirpal II to Assurbanipal) and the period from the late 9th to the 7th century in Urartu (beginning with the reign of Sarduri son of Lutibri [= 'Sarduri I']). Their availability reflects how active a given ruler was in constructing or renovating temples and palaces (where royal inscriptions were displayed or, in Assyria, also deposited in the building foundations) and in creating monuments such as statues, steles and rock reliefs. Documentation for individual rulers is linked not only to the length of their reign but also to the chances of archaeological recovery. On the one hand, not all kings commissioned suitable building projects during their lifetime and as a rule, kings only report their own achievements, never those of their predecessors. On the other hand, not all buildings or monuments have been discovered. The many recent discoveries of Urartian royal inscriptions in Turkey and Iran are an indication of the intensified research of recent years. Because their inscriptions were composed and produced at suitable moments during their lifetime, there is never a complete sequence of the deeds of Assyrian and Urartian rulers available. Moreover, as a rule, the accounts in royal inscriptions, be they Assyrian[1] or Urartian,[2] only mention the enemy in circumstances that present the commissioner of the inscription in a favourable light, i.e. normally as the victor in a military encounter or the recipient of a

[1] Grayson 1991; 1996; Grayson and Novotny 2012; 2014; Frame 2020; Fuchs 1994; Leichty 2011; Novotny and Jeffers 2018; Tadmor and Yamada 2011.

[2] *CTU*. Lemmatised editions of all texts contained in *CTU*, with English translations by B. Christiansen, are offered in the *Electronic Corpus of Urartian Texts: oracc.museum.upenn.edu/ecut*.

diplomatic mission. This obvious bias needs to be taken into account. Assyrian inscriptions tend to give concrete (year) dates for the events reported which provides the backbone for the chronological reconstruction of Assyrian-Urartian interaction. This information generally matches and on occasion enhances the data provided by the Assyrian Eponym Chronicles, which note Urartu as a frequent destination of military campaigns between 830 and 714 BC as well as Urartu's defeat in battle in 743 BC.[3]

In addition, the architectural decoration of several palaces and temples in the Assyrian heartland depict military interaction with Urartu. The earliest depiction dates already to the reign of Assurnasirpal II (883–859 BC) and therefore predates the available textual evidence. Reliefs from the reign of Assurbanipal of Assyria (668–630 BC) show Urartian diplomats at the Assyrian court.

Archival materials such as letters, reports and lists were not written with the intention of impressing contemporaries and future generations and therefore lack the bias of official inscriptions. However, only very little material is currently known from Urartu and the still poorly understood clay tablets excavated in Bastam in Iran, Karmir-Blur in Armenia, and several sites in Turkey[4] cannot enlighten us about Urartian foreign policy. The Assyrian material is more numerous and more relevant but only available for certain periods. The letters from the state correspondence of the Assyrian kings Tiglath-pileser III (745–727 BC) and Sargon II (721–705 BC) with their top officials, excavated in the Assyrian royal palaces of Kalhu (modern Nimrud) and Nineveh,[5] are by far the most important body of sources. They demonstrate in particular that Assyria kept close taps on Urartu by running an extensive intelligence network in the frontier region and even inside Urartian territories.[6] Even in the time of the far more peaceful relationship during the reign of Esarhaddon (680–669 BC), a few fragmentary oracle queries illustrate the ongoing efforts to assess Urartian strength and strategy.[7]

The following table gives a survey of key sources providing dated evidence for encounters between Assyria and Urartu.[8] As will be immediately apparent, our knowledge is very dependent on the Assyrian material. On the Urartian side, the annalistic inscriptions of Argishti I[9] and Sarduri II[10] provide evidence that is datable due to its links to the Assyrian material.

[3] Millard 1994.
[4] *CTU* IV, pp. 121–206.
[5] Dietrich 2003; Fuchs and Parpola 2001; Lanfranchi and Parpola 1990; Luukko 2012; Parpola 1987.
[6] Dubovsky 2006.
[7] Starr 1990, nos. 18, 19, 24, 205.
[8] For text references, see Fuchs 2012, 135–38.
[9] Horhor Annals; *CTU* A8-3.
[10] Hazine Kapısı Annals; *CTU* A9-1.

Table 1: I = Inscription; EC = Eponym Chronicles.

Urartian sources		***Assyrian sources***	
	860s	Gate decoration—Assurnasirpal II	Battle at Mt Urina.
	859	I—Shalmaneser III	Assyrian attack on Urartian territories, then successful siege of the royal fortress Sugunia.
	856	I—Shalmaneser III	Assyrian attack on Urartian territories, then battle against forces led by Arramu of Urartu near the royal fortress Arzashkun.
	844	I—Shalmaneser III	Assyrian attack on territories of Arramu of Urartu in the region between the Tigris headwaters and the Murat Su.
	830	EC; I—Shalmaneser III	Assyrian attack on Urartian territories in the Murat Su basin, led by commander-in-chief Dayan-Ashur, then battle against forces led by Sarduri of Urartu.
	ca. 820	I—Shamshi-Adad V	Assyrian attack on territories of Ishpuini of Urartu led by chief eunuch Mutarris-Ashur.
	781	EC	'Against Urartu'
	780	EC	'Against Urartu'
	779	EC	'Against Urartu'
	778	EC	'Against Urartu'
	776	EC	'Against Urartu'
I—Argishti I	774	EC; I—commander-in-chief Shamshi-ilu	Urartian attack on Assyrian territories, then battle against Assyrian forces led by commander-in-chief Shamshi-ilu.
I—Argishti I	773		Urartian attack on Assyrian territories.
I—Sarduri II	754		Urartian victory in battle against Assyrian forces led by king Ashur-nerari V in region of Arpad.
	743	EC; I—Tiglath-pileser III	Assyrian victory in battle against Urartian forces led by king Sarduri in region of Kummuhu.
	735	EC; I—Tiglath-pileser III	Assyrian raid into Urartian territories, then unsuccessful siege of royal fortress Turushpa.
	719	I—Sargon	Assyrian-Urartian war by proxy in Mannea begins.
	714	EC; I—Sargon	Battle against Urartian and allied forces led by king Rusa at Mt Uaush.
	672	I—Esarhaddon	After the conquest of Shupria, Esarhaddon orders the return of all Urartian fugitives in Shupria to king Rusa.
	652	I—Assurbanipal	Urartian delegates sent by king Rusa participate in Assyrian victory celebrations at Arbail after the defeat of Elam.
	ca. 646–42	I—Assurbanipal	King Sarduri enters a client relationship with Assurbanipal and delivers tribute.

Urartu's Relationship with the Assyrian Empire

The discussion of the available sources will have made clear that any attempt to analyse Urartian foreign policy against its southern neighbour has no other option than to rely very heavily on Assyrian sources. These materials focus prominently on aggressive or defensive military acts and only on rare occasions reference any other form of political action directly.

However, raids and battles were just one manifestation of the overwhelmingly hostile relationship between the two superpowers. References to client states changing sides in the Assyrian sources are relatively frequent (usually mentioned when justifying a subsequent attack on their territory). The mountain regions between the headwaters of the Tigris and those of the Lower Zab, in the corridor between the provincial borders of Urartu and Assyria, were home to a string of small kingdoms that were allowed, by either side, to remain nominally independent.[11] Urartu competed with Assyria for the favour of these smaller states, especially in the regions on the south-western and south-eastern boundaries of Urartu's territory, at the modern border between Syria and Turkey along the Euphrates and to the south-west of Lake Urmia in Iran, respectively.

In the following, we will assess Urartu's relationship with the Assyrian empire, focusing on changes in attitude and policy. It goes without saying that much must remain speculative.

860s–820 BC: Urartian Expansion and Assyrian Incursions

Urartian state formation and its subsequent consolidation direction led to direct conflict with Assyria, in particular in the Upper Tigris region and in the region south of Lake Urmia in the 860s to 820s.

According to the Assyrian sources, the first contacts between Assyria and Urartu date to the reign of Assurnasirpal II (884–859 BC) and are the result of Assyrian advances into Anatolia, in the region of the Tigris headwaters.[12] Open conflict is first attested in the inscriptions of Shalmaneser III (858–824 BC), but when recounting his very first campaign in the year 859 BC into Urartian territory, ruled by king Arramu,[13] the Assyrian narrative suggests not

[11] For Shupria, Kumme, Ukku and Musasir, some of the most important among these states, see Radner 2012.

[12] Grayson 1991, A.0.101.2: 13 and parallels.

[13] Grayson 1996, A.0.102.2 i 14–25 and parallel.

so much a first encounter but another stage in an ongoing war. It is therefore likely that the open conflict between Assyria and Urartu had already started in the later part of Assurnasirpal's reign, for which we are lacking accounts. However, there is pictorial evidence: a scene on the bronze sheathing decorating the gates of the Mamu temple of Imgur-Ellil (Balawat), created during the late reign of Assurnasirpal II (883–859 BC), shows Assyrians fighting at 'Mt Urina' (according to the cuneiform label) against warriors dressed in a style later exclusively reserved for depicting Urartians.[14]

The inscriptions of Shalmaneser III of Assyria (859–824 BC), our key source material for this period of Assyro-Urartian relations, record several raids into established Urartian territory as well as sieges and, for 856 BC, a major pitched battle near the then-capital city of Arzashkun. Although the exact location of this city is not known, a position in north-western Iran, to the west or south-west of Lake Urmia, appears to be most likely.[15] It would be a mistake to see in Arramu by default the founder of the Urartian state, for the Assyrian sources suggest nothing of the sort; rather, Shalmaneser's accounts create the impression of a firmly established, well-oiled state with an impressive war machinery at its call, and this could be seen to imply that Arramu's kingdom was more than a fledgling state at the time.

Assyria was apparently able to counter the Urartian expansion attempts in the Murat Su region and to the west and south of Lake Urmia. The Assyrian raids and the attack on the Urartian centre of Arzashkun would seem to be designed to destabilise the state and prevent the consolidation of Urartian territorial gains. Although these attempts remained unsuccessful in the longer run, we may assume a connection between the surely negative effects of the Assyrian incursions and some drastic adjustments in the young Urartian state. This is, firstly, the dynastic change from Arramu to Sarduri son of Lutibri at some point after 844 BC and before 830 BC and, secondly, the move of the capital city from Arzashkun to Turushpa, a well-protected mountain fortress on the eastern shore of Lake Van.

In 830 BC, when the Assyrian army clashed with the Urartian forces, now under the command of king Sarduri son of Lutipri, the odds seem to have changed in Urartu's favour.[16] When an Assyrian army reached the regions west of Lake Urmia a decade later in 820 BC, they found them to be firmly under Urartian control.[17]

[14] Curtis and Tallis 2008, 55, 160–61, figs. 59–60; Fuchs 2012, 160; Piller 2012, 389.
[15] Piller 2012, 388–89.
[16] Grayson 1996, A.0.102.14:141–146 and parallel.
[17] Grayson 1996, A.0.103.1 ii 16-30.

The new ruler Sarduri was the first Urartian king to commission his own inscriptions. Crucially, they were composed in Assyrian cuneiform script and also language, unlike the contemporary Assyrian inscriptions that used a literary dialect emulating the Old Babylonian language. Sarduri's inscriptions are modelled on Assyrian royal letters rather than on inscriptions.[18] One must therefore assume that Sarduri's inscriptions were the creation of an Assyrian, either captive or renegade, who was familiar with the letter-writing conventions of the Assyrian government and therefore also its administrative practices more generally. The advice and services of such an individual would have been invaluable at a time when consolidating and organising the young Urartian state was the key challenge for Sarduri. The agency of this anonymous Assyrian individual may serve to explain structural similarities in Urartu's state organisation with the southern neighbour.[19]

The open conflict between Urartu and Assyria continued throughout the long reign of Shalmaneser and into the reign of his successor Shamshi-Adad V (823–811 BC) and his contemporary, Sarduri's son Ishpuini. When an early inscription of Shamshi-Adad describes a raid on Urartian territory, namely '11 fortresses with 200 settlements', conducted probably in the year 620 or not long after, the region in question seems to describe territories south of Lake Urmia formerly held by Assyria's vassal state Gilzanu.[20] Urartu would seem to have profited from the succession war that paralysed Assyria between 826 and 820 BC. No longer plagued by Assyrian raids into its territory, Urartu was able to expand its dominion and to secure control over the previously contested lands around Lake Urmiye.

810s–782 BC: Avoiding Direct Confrontation with Assyria

For the next four decades, we have no reports on the contacts between Assyria and Urartu. During this time, Assyria was preoccupied with consolidating the gains in territory achieved throughout the 9th century, and we may assume a similar situation for Urartu.

By 820, over the course of about half a century, Urartu had been able to establish the mountain range south of the Murat Su on the one hand and the Zagros main range on the other hand as its boundaries, banishing Assyria from territories previously regarded as owing it allegiance and tribute. Judging from

[18] Wilhelm 1987, 106.
[19] Radner 2011, 742–43.
[20] Fuchs 2012, 136, 139.

the Assyrian sources, the following centuries are marked by the avoidance of further conflict. While Urartu was clearly strong enough to deter Assyria from attempting to regain its lost claims in south-western Anatolia and north-western Iran, it did not endeavour to extend its territories at the expense of its southern rival.

781–744 BC: Encroaching on Assyrian Interests

Between 781 and 774 BC, Assyria and Urartu found themselves again in a more or less permanent state of open and violent conflict. The theatres of war were located in north-western Iran (called 'Gutium' in the Assyrian inscriptions) and 'Hatti', i.e. the successor states of that Bronze Age kingdom in the border region between modern Turkey and Syria. While neither side was able to make permanent territorial gains, we can safely assume that the exploits of the two armies, which lived off the land while on campaign, resulted in severe economic pressure on the local kingdoms of Carchemish,[21] Marqasu (the region around modern Maraş) and Kummuhu (Commagene, centred on modern Samsat).

Information is sparse but this time, Urartu emerges very much as the aggressor. The kingdom attempted to enlarge its sphere of influence at the expense of the Assyrian empire. The conflicts in the years 781, 780, 779, 778 and 776 are but tersely reported in the Assyrian Eponym Chronicles which feature the entry 'Against Urartu' for these years.[22]

We have considerably more information for the year 774, when inscriptions of the Assyrian commander-in-chief (*turtānu*) Shamshi-ilu – charged with protecting the Assyrian empire's western front from his stronghold of Til-Barsip (Tell Ahmar on the Middle Euphrates) – complement the so-called Annals of Argishti son of Minua. Urartu can be seen on the offensive, and both the Assyrian and the Urartian sources report Urartian attacks on Assyrian territories.

The fifth year in Argishti's Annals corresponds to the year 774 BC, according to the calculations of Fuchs.[23] Generally speaking, the Annals are interspersed with praise to the gods and somewhat formulaic so that the flow of the narrative is frequently not entirely clear. However, correspondences with toponyms known from Assyrian sources allow to confidently pin-point the geographical horizon of the Urartian campaign in the fifth year as the Central Zagros region:

> Argishti says: For the god Haldi I accomplished these undertakings. The god Haldi went to war with his weapon, he defeated the troops of the land Assyria, he

[21] Marriott and Radner 2015.
[22] Millard 1994, 38–39.
[23] Fuchs 2012, 151.

> defeated the land of the (tribe) 'Arsita, He subjected the land to Argishti. Argishti son of Minua says: I *added* the land Assyria (and) its troops to my land. I mobilised the troops. I prayed to the god Haldi, (my) lord, the weather-god, the sun-god (and all) the gods of the land Biainili (= Urartu). Through the greatness of my Lord *ali abadi* the gods listened to me.[24]

The text continues with an account of the Urartian incursions into the territories of Baruata (Assyrian Bit-Barrû/Barrua), Babilu (Assyrian Dannutu-samar-Babili: the mountain lands stretching from the Diyala headwaters into western Iran)[25] and Parsua. The traditional Mesopotamian designation for the Central Zagros region, where we find Argishti's forces campaigning, is Gutium. According to the inscriptions of Shamshi-ilu, one of the most senior officials of the Assyrian king Adad-nerari III, he was able to expel the Urartian forces from Gutium, and as Fuchs argued,[26] it is very likely that this report needs to be connected to Argishti's account for his fifth year. The inscription on two monumental stone lion statues adorning the gate of Shamshi-ilu's residence city Til-Barsip celebrates this event with the following words:

> At that time Argishti, the Urartian – the number of whose forces is huge like a thick cloud and who had not had relations with (lit. 'stretched out his hand to') any previous king – rebelled and assembled the people together at the land of the Gutium. He put his (forces for) battle in good order (and then) all his troops marched into the mountains for battle. By the command of the god Ashur, the father, the great lord and the goddess Mullissu, the lofty mother of the Esharra temple, foremost among the gods, Shamshi-ilu, the field marshal, the great herald, [the administrator of] temples, head of the extensive army, put a strong force of soldiers into those mountains. With the great roar of drums (and) weapons at the ready which reverberate terrifyingly, he rushed forth like a terrible storm. He let fly the stormy steeds, harnessed to his chariot, against him (Argishti) like the Anzu-bird and defeated him. He (Argishti) abandoned his troops (and) scattered people (and), frightened by the battle, he escaped like a thief. He (Shamshi-ilu) captured from him his camp, his royal treasure, (and) his […].[27]

The inscription of a fragmentary stone monument from Dohuk in the Kurdish Autonomous Region of Iraq also celebrates the success of the commander-in-chief against Argishti and parallels and is likely to complement the account from Til-Barsip:

> Shamshi-ilu, man fearless [in battle, …] … upon his steeds, the extensive river […] to him and Argishti, in the midst of battle, the bow [… he (Argishti) abandoned] his camp (and) with a single horse he [disappeared. …].[28]

[24] *CTU* A8-3 ii 49-iii 3; English translation courtesy Birgit Christiansen.
[25] *Cf.* Fuchs 2012, 150.
[26] Fuchs 2012, 150.
[27] Grayson 1996, A.0.104.2010: 11–18.
[28] Grayson 1996, A.0.104.2011: 3'–6'.

I do not find convincing Fuchs's assumption[29] that this text reports another confrontation, perhaps at the Murat Su river in Anatolia, as the headwaters of the Lower Zab and the Diyala provide ample candidates for identification with 'the extensive river' and as the passage is otherwise very similar to the text of the Til-Barsip lions.

For the following year, corresponding to 773 BC, Argishti's Annals describe another defeat of the Assyrian forces as well as the expulsion of Assyria from territories in north-western Iran; the land Bushtu borders onto the land Mana, Assyrian Mannea, which occupies the region south of Lake Urmia.

> [Argishti] says: For the god Haldi I accomplished these undertakings in one year. The god Haldi [went to war with] his weapon, he defeated [the soldiers] of Assyria, he defeated the land Bushtu (and) the land Tariu, he subjected them to Argishti. Through the greatness of the god Haldi Argishti says: I built fortresses, I *controlled* the land Shurishili; (I) …ed the soldiers of the land Assyria in front of my land. I prayed to the god Haldi, my Lord, the weather-god, the sun-god, (and all) the gods of the land Biainili (= Urartu). Through the greatness of my Lord *ali abadi* the gods listened to me. Argishti son of Minua says: The god Haldi is *victorious*, the weapon of the god Haldi is *victorious*. Through the greatness Haldi I mobilised the *auarashi* men, I expelled the land Assyria, I killed […] from my land; Dadani (and) the *auarashi* men. […] and I burnt down.[30]

In Argishti's annals, Assyria is again mentioned for the eighth year, that is 771 BC, in the context of campaign against the country Mana (Assyrian Mannea). From there, Argishti's forces are able to reach 'the pass of the land Assyria', certainly one of the passes across the Zagros main ridge at the border between Iran and the Kurdish Autonomous Region of Iraq, possibly Kele near Qaladze.

> Argishti says: For the god Haldi I achieved these undertakings in one year. Haldi went to war with his weapon, he defeated the land Mana (Assyrian Mannea), he defeated the land Irkiuni and he submitted them to Argishti. Through the greatness of the god Haldi Argishti son of Minua says: I prayed to Haldi, my Lord, the weather-god, the sun-god (and all) the gods of the land Biainili. Through the greatness of (my) Lord *ali abadi* the gods listened to me. Argishti son of Minua says: Haldi is *victorious*, the weapon of the god Haldi is *victorious*. Through the greatness of the god Haldi I went to war against the land Mana, I conquered the land Irkiuni, I came to the pass of the land Assyria; 6471 people in one year, some (of them) I killed, some (of them) I deported alive, (together with) 286 horses, 2251 cattle, 8205 sheep.[31]

[29] Fuchs 2012, 150.
[30] *CTU* A8-3: iii 18–23; English translation courtesy Birgit Christiansen.
[31] *CTU* A8-3: iv 9–39; English translation courtesy Birgit Christiansen.

During the reign of Argishti, Urartu clearly had the upper hand in the relationship with the Assyrian empire. It was the aggressor against whose incursions Assyria just about managed to defend itself. Ultimately, however, Urartu did not substantially increase its territory at Assyria's expense. But the kingdom was able to consolidate its power and influence over smaller polities that hitherto had accepted Assyrian dominion. The available sources highlight this in particular for north-western Iran.

The following two decades saw Assyria entangled with internal problems. The Eponym Chronicles mention a series of epidemics and rebellions as the key events of years during the period, and the Assyrian army was largely occupied at home.[32] During that time, Urartu's influence in 'Hatti' – the border region between modern Turkey and Syria, west of the Euphrates – grew steadily. By the time Sarduri son of Argishti ('Sarduri II') came to the throne, Urartian power had eclipsed that of Assyria in the minds of some local rulers who had formerly accepted the Assyrian king as overlord and arbiter in all border conflicts.

This led again to open conflict between Assyria and Urartu. In 754 BC, the Urartian troops under Sarduri's command defeated the Assyrian forces of Assur-nerari V (754–745 BC). As the Assyrian Eponym Chronicles specify that the army went 'Against Arpad' in 754,[33] it is generally assumed that this battle took place in the territory of the kingdom of Arpad in northern Syria: 'The god Haldi went to war with his weapon. … He defeated Ashur-nerari son of Adad-nerari, king of the land Assyria.'[34]

However, despite defeating the newly appointed king Assur-nerari V in his accession year, Sarduri did not capitalise on his victory and refrained from attempting incursions into territories under direct Assyrian control. In the next decade, Urartu contended itself with bringing the smaller kingdoms of south-western Anatolia and north-western Iran into its sphere of influence.

743–735 BC: Assyria Strikes Back

A dozen years later, in 743 BC, just after Tiglath-pileser III (744–727 BC) had taken the Assyrian throne for himself by force, the new king headed into the territory of one of Urartu's new clients and defeated the Urartian army in a second battle in Arpad. The Eponym Chronicles state prosaically: 'The land

[32] Millard 1994, 40–43.
[33] Millard 1994, 43.
[34] *CTU* A 9-1: left edge ll. 1–2, 8–10.

Urartu was defeated at the city Arpad.'[35] The text inscribed on the stone wall decorations of Tiglath-pileser's palace in the capital city Kalhu adds more detail regarding the fighting and includes a battle in the territory of Kummuhu (Commagene), the taking of the Urartian camp and the flight of the king, as well as the subsequent pursuit of the Urartian forces back to Turushpa:

> Sarduri of the land Urartu revolted against me and conspired with Mati'-il son of Agusi (i.e. king of Arpad). Between the lands [Kishtan] and Halpi, districts of the city Kummuhu, I utterly defeated him and took his entire camp away from him. He became frightened of [the terrifying radiance of] my weapons, mounted a mare [in] order to save his life, escaped during the night to Mount Sizir, a rugged mountain, and ascended (it).[36]

Yet again an Urartian king is portrayed as a coward who abandons his troops and flees on a lone horse, this time from the battlefield – whether this is fact or fiction is unclear; we shall see that not only Sarduri's predecessor Argishti but also his successor Rusa are said to flee in this very fashion.

Tiglath-pileser's inscription continues immediately with a description of the siege of Turushpa, but this summary account of the king's greatest deeds conflates the 743 events with the campaign of 735 BC, for which the Eponym Chronicles offer another terse 'Against the land Urartu'. The so-called Annals of Tiglath-pileser, the very fragmentarily preserved year-by-year account of the king's deeds, would have offered far more detail but what we have are merely accounts of the spoils of people, equids, cattle and sheep from the Assyrian raids deep into Urartian territory.[37] Another equally broken inscription makes it clear that the incursion followed the course of the Murat Su river, the Assyrian Arsania.[38] The final destination was the Urartian capital city of Turushpa:

> I confined Sarduri of the land Urartu to the city Turushpa, his city, and inflicted a great defeat upon him before his city gates. I fashioned my royal image and erected (it) in front of the city Turushpa. or a distance of seventy leagues, [I proudly] marched [through the] extensive land of Urartu, from one end to the other (lit. 'from above to below'), (and) I had no opponent (therein).[39]

This was the first time, and as far as we know, also the only tine that Assyrian troops ever reached Turushpa. Situated on a rock high above Lake Van, the city proved impregnable. However, the siege had high symbolic significance and marked a change in the balance of power, heralding Assyria's supremacy

[35] Millard 1994, 43.
[36] Tadmor and Yamada 2011, 103, no. 41: 15'–21'.
[37] Tadmor and Yamada 2011, 54–57, nos. 18–19.
[38] Tadmor and Yamada 2011, 89, no. 36: 11'–13'
[39] Tadmor and Yamada 2011, 103, no. 41: 21'–26'.

over the Near East. Already the Assyrian victory of 743 had massively curbed Urartian engagement in the West. Without Urartian support troops to assist them, the northern Syrian kingdoms of Arpad, Hamath and Unqu were invaded by the Assyrian army in the following years and annexed as provinces.[40] The year 735 saw Assyrian domination confirmed although it is extremely doubtful that Tiglath-pileser's victory monument survived for long at Turushpa. No trace of it has ever been found.

734–708 BC: Losing Regional Influence in South-western Anatolia and North-western Iran

In the light of the ongoing Assyrian expansion in the West, the surviving smaller kingdoms in the modern border region between Turkey and Syria, such as Que (Cilicia), are known to have actively sought Urartu's protection. But these attempts seem to have been largely unsuccessful, and in some cases the diplomatic delegations never even reached their destination. Hence, after the annexation of Que as an Assyrian province just prior to, or at the very beginning of, the reign of Sargon II (721–705 BC), the province's new Assyrian governor was able to report to his king that 'A messenger of Mita of Mushki (i.e. Midas the Phrygian) has come to me, bringing me 14 men of Que whom (their king) Warikas had sent to Urartu as an embassy,' to which the king replies: 'This is extremely good! My gods Ashur, Shamash, Bel and Nabû have now taken action, and without a battle or anything, the man of Mushki has given us his word and become our ally!'[41]

While Urartu was keeping quiet on the western front, it did not give up its efforts to counter Assyrian influence entirely. Urartu now concentrated its military activities on north-western Iran and attempted to replace Assyria as the overlord of its regional client states. In particular, Assyria and Urartu participated between 719 and 714 BC with great energy in the complex secession and succession wars that ripped apart the kingdom of Mannea[42] in north-western Iran. During that time, parts of Mannea seceded to form the kingdom of Zikirtu.[43]

Assyrian and Urartian military involvement in Mannea's affairs culminated in 714 BC in a pitched battle on Mt Uaush, which Sargon II's famous account in his Letter to the God Assur[44] styled as an epic confrontation between himself

[40] Radner 2006, 58–63.
[41] Parpola 1987, no. 1.
[42] Fuchs 1994, 447–50 *s.v.* Mannaja.
[43] Fuchs 1994, 471 *s.v.* Zikirtu.
[44] Thureau-Dangin 1912; most recent editions: Mayer 2013; Frame 2020, 271–307, no. 65.

and Rusa II of Urartu, who is said to have cowardly fled the battlefield: 'In order to save his life, he abandoned his chariot, mounted a mare and fled ahead of his army' (l. 140). This closely resembles the description of his predecessors Argishti and Sarduri in Shamshi-ilu's and Tiglath-pileser's inscriptions – clearly a literary *topos* that highlights how such battle reports should not tempt us to reconstruct the actual events of battle. Sargon's later inscriptions assigned fateful relevance to this battle, as Rusa's shameful act was seen as resulting directly in his equally shameful suicide in 713 BC.[45] However, this Assyrian interpretation may not necessarily have echoed Urartian views on the matter. How significant the engagement in Mannea and its eventual failure were for Urartian foreign policy is unclear. But one can certainly assume that Urartu's inability to champion the interests of its chosen candidate must have considerably damaged its credibility as a powerful protector in the eyes of the world.

Nevertheless, some still saw Urartu as a credible alternative to Assyria. Muwatalli of Kummuhu (Commagene) could look back at long years as an Assyrian ally, and his country had been loyal to the Assyrian empire for at least a century.[46] Sargon II of Assyria (721–704 BC) had only recently rewarded Muwatalli's loyalty with additional territories, when he violated his agreements with Assyria and entered a treaty with Urartu in 709 BC.[47] Perhaps Muwatalli's betrayal was the outcome of an Urartian diplomatic offensive designed to drastically alter the balance of power in that strategically important region on its south-western perimeter, after having lost influence in Iran. In the light of the Assyrian annexation of the neighbouring kingdoms of Carchemish in 717 BC[48] and Marqasu in 711 BC,[49] an alliance with Urartu may have seemed to Muwatalli as the only way to preserve Kummuhu's independence. However that may be, when the Assyrian forces attacked the turncoat vassal in the following year there is no mention of any direct engagement with Urartu, which must have bitterly disappointed this newest member of the Urartian block.

In 708 BC, Kummuhu was conquered and integrated into the Assyrian provincial system. As a result, Assyria now shared for the very first time a border with Urartu. Sargon did not take any risks with the new neighbour. Kummuhu was put under the direct command of one of the highest military officials and thus given the special status reserved for heavily militarised provinces in

[45] Fuchs 1994, 416 *s.v.* Ursā.
[46] Radner 2009, 232–33.
[47] Fuchs 1994, 413 *s.v.* Muttallu.
[48] Radner 2006, 58.
[49] Radner 2006, 61.

potential conflict areas. The region was now known as the Land of the Commander-in-Chief of the Left (*turtānu shumēlu*).[50]

That the two rival powers now shared a boundary was bound to have changed their relationship. There are no conflicts reported in the sources for the following decades, although the Assyrian military intervention in the former Urartian influence sphere continued, in particular in south-western Anatolia. Unlike previous rulers, Argishti and his successors have not left any monuments in this region, and we may take this as an indication for Urartu's withdrawal from this specific theatre of war, in avoidance of a direct confrontation with Assyria.

707–660s BC: Entente with Assyria

It was at this time that Urartu's northern border was seriously threatened by the incursions of Cimmerian riders who had entered Anatolia from the Caucasus region, as Assyrian intelligence reports relayed to the king.[51] The years of active military conflict between Assyria and Urartu ended. To our knowledge, however, no formal peace treaty was ever concluded.

Relations seem more cordial some three decades later in the 670s, although there is still no peace treaty in place. Nevertheless, in 673 BC, the direct contact zone between Assyria and Urartu significantly increased as a consequence of the Assyrian annexation of Shupria, a kingdom in the headwaters of the Tigris on Urartu's south-western border. Yet Esarhaddon of Assyria (680–669 BC) appears very keen to appease Urartu, at least after the event, by voluntarily handing over every Urartian encountered on Shuprian territory.[52]

The careful management of the relationship may be linked to the assassination of Sennacherib of Assyria (704–681 BC) and his murderers' escape to Urartu after Esarhaddon's victory in the ensuing succession war.[53] As the killers were Sennacherib's own sons and Esarhaddon's brothers and therefore had a legitimate claim to the Assyrian throne (for patricide or fratricide were not considered an obstacle to an Assyrian prince's claim to the crown), the fact that they found refuge in Urartu enabled Assyria's arch rival to put considerable pressure on the reigning Assyrian king who could never consider his

[50] Radner 2006, 48–49.
[51] Lanfranchi 1990.
[52] Leichty 2011, no. 33 iii 28'–34'.
[53] Frahm 1997, 18–19.

possession of the throne absolutely secure as long as Sennacherib's sons or their offspring were alive.

This explains why Esarhaddon and his successor Assurbanipal were careful not to cross Urartian interests, handing over Urartian fugitives, as Esarhaddon did after annexing the buffer state Shupria in 673, or refraining from retaliation, as Assurbanipal did when later faced with an Urartian raid into Shupria.[54]

Andreas Fuchs persuasively argued that the threat that Urartu was able to exercise over the Assyrian monarch may have resulted in substantial Assyrian payments to Urartu in order to ensure that the murderous princes were not allowed to return.[55] The existence of such an agreement between Assyria and Urartu would also provide a partial answer to the question of how the numerous large-scale Urartian building projects of the 7th century, including Karmir-Blur, Bastam, Ayanis and Kef Kalesi, were funded. That Assyrian workers were involved in the construction of the sanctuary of Ayanis on the eastern shore of Lake Van is explicitly stated in the temple inscription[56] and also indicated by the finds of Assyrian pottery in some houses in the residential area, whose occupants' meat consumption (far less beef, more mutton) moreover differed significantly from that of their neighbours.[57] Craftsmen such as these may have been sent to Urartu as part of the payments to guarantee the royal plotters' permanent absence from Assyria and can be connected to the fresh Assyrian impulses detectable in Urartian art at that time.[58]

650s–640s BC: Acceptance of Assyrian Sovereignty

In 652 BC, there is definite evidence for diplomatic relations between the two states. However, by that year Assyria's thoughtful attitude towards Urartu had most certainly ended and been replaced with an unequal relationship that saw Assyria in a much stronger position. This is demonstrated in Assurbanipal's inscriptions and also in his Nineveh palace reliefs[59] which show him treating an Urartian diplomatic delegation with contempt and threat, forcing them to witness the abuse of their fellow diplomats from Elam:

[54] Novotny and Jeffers 2018, no. 3: iv 6–14 and parallels.
[55] Fuchs 2012, 141–44.
[56] *CTU* A12-1: section VI, line 10.
[57] Stone 2012, 97.
[58] Seidl 2004, 207.
[59] Kaelin 1999, 26, 28, 30–31: scenes 52, 55, 58, 60, 73–74.

> (As for) Rusa, the king of the land Urartu, he heard about the might of the god Ashur and the goddess Ishtar, my lords, and fear of my royal majesty overwhelmed him; he (then) sent his envoys to me in the city Arbail (modern Erbil) to inquire about my well-being. [He …] horses, mules, […], horn-shaped (drinking vessels), sceptres, […], (and) *purṭû*-weapons as his audience gift(s). I made Nabû-damiq (and) Umbadarâ, envoys of the land Elam, stand with writing boards (inscribed with) insolent messages before them.[60]

It would seem that Urartu was no longer in a position to control the Assyrian king, most likely because the murderous princes were no longer alive.

But Urartu's relationship with Assyria was to become even more unequal. The very last Urartian king attested in the Assyrian sources, yet another Sarduri, is presented as a mere client ruler of the Assyrian empire – unlike all his predecessors whom the Assyrian kings had accepted as their equals. King Sarduri is said to have submitted to Assurbanipal and paid tribute to Assyria:

> (As for) Sarduri, the king of the land Urartu, whose kings, his ancestors, used to regularly send (messages of) brotherly relations to my ancestors, now, Sarduri heard about the mighty deeds that the great gods had determined for me and, like a son to his father, he constantly sent (messages concerning my) dominion. Moreover, he constantly sent (messages) according to this wording, saying: 'May it be well with the king, my lord.' Reverently (and) humbly, he was (now) sending his substantial audience gift(s) before me.[61]

Urartu's position in the world appears much reduced and to the gleeful Assurbanipal, it is now merely one of his numerous client states. Comparing different versions of Assurbanipal's annals makes it possibly to pinpoint this turning point in Urartu's relations with the Assyrian empire to sometimes between 646 and 642.[62]

Afterwards, both the Assyrian and the Urartian sources fall silent about each other and it is impossible to say anything about their continuing relationship. There is little reason to assume that Urartu was able to recover its former political standing. When the Assyrian empire found its end in the wars from 614 BC onwards, Urartu was apparently no longer in any position to get involved.

[60] Novotny and Jeffers 2018, no. 6: vii 20'–28' // no. 7: vii 11–20.
[61] Novotny and Jeffers 2018, no. 11: x 40–50.
[62] Fuchs 2012, 138.

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AN INTRODUCTION TO THE NORTHERN EXPANSION OF THE URARTIAN STATE*

Atilla BATMAZ

Abstract

Although the earliest area and geographical core of the Urartian kingdom was the Lake Van basin, north of this area was a sphere of interest from the very first stages of the kingdom. This early interest in the North mirrors Assyria's interest in the Urartian homeland in the late 2nd and early 1st millennium BC. After the local powers and unions of political entities became a state in the 9th century BC, under the name of Biainili, it launched military and social initiatives into the North which were not dissimilar to Assyria's one-time policy toward the Urartian homelands. Urartian military exploits against the northern provinces, which are understood sometimes to have involved gaining control by appointing governors,[1] most often targeted antagonistic and riotous entities with the purpose of economic gains and security. This paper offers an outline of the northern policy of the Urartian kingdom and has as its main aim to understand some economic aspects of the expansion.

GEOGRAPHICAL LIMITS

With the Lake Van basin considered the homeland of the Urartian kingdom, the concept of the northern lands can be defined by the Süngütaş, Sarıkamış, Taşköprü and Hanak/Ortakent inscriptions, located to the north of the Araxes river (Fig. 1). This reflects an idea of the North which is, more or less, linear. In a broader sense, the definition of the North begins north of the Upper Murat, runs through Erzurum and Ağrı Doğubeyazıt, and extends to slightly south of the modern Georgian border, a far-flung zone. To this zone, the north-east of Doğubeyazıt and the Lake Sevan basin could well be added (Figs. 1–2). All the above-mentioned geographical areas also comprise political and cultural zones in which the absolute dominance of the Urartian kingdom can be seen. These zones collected tribute, along with frontier areas, as buffer clients; they

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[1] The Kamo (Nor-Bayazet) inscription of Rusa I notes that a governor was assigned to the country of Uelikuhi (*CTU* A 10-1).

were boundary zones in which Urartian hallmarks cannot be prominently tracked, but rather only fugitive influences seen.[2]

Although Urartian inscriptions reach almost to the Georgian border, Köroğlu[3] thinks that northern areas under direct control must have extended not further than Pasinler district or, more generally, slightly beyond the Araxes valley. In the north-east, the Lake Sevan (Gökçe) basin, Ararat and the Shirak (Şüregel) plains contained Urartian provincial centres[4] and a variety of construction activities under the control of Urartian power were undertaken there (see Kroll above in this volume). North of the Araxes and west of Arpaçay were areas considered by Köroğlu[5] to have been seized and plundered, since the Urartian inscription did not note any construction activity there. A set of fortresses in the Arpaçay valley in Nakhchıvan hold traces of Urartian features, although more concrete and direct evidence is required to prove Urartian domination in the Şərur plain. Urartian cultural similarities in Georgia, however, represented nothing more than inspiration by indirect cultural contact.[6] The harsh geographical and climatic conditions of the North were not dissimilar to those of the Urartian homeland. Furthermore, it is clear from the Urartian inscriptions that the North covered quite a large area, containing a patchwork of polities. However, the potential for gains in agriculture, animal husbandry, mining and manpower in the northern lands must have been tempting. It was a necessity for the newly established kingdom of Urartu, which had no chance of expanding southward owing to the existence there of its bitter rival Assyria, to obtain access to the rich resources of the North.

Military Achievements in the North[7]

The earliest reference to a place north of the Urartian core area was made by Ishpuini in the third quarter of the 9th century BC. Laconic Assyrian inscriptions on the bronze votive rings deriving from Upper Anzaf Fortress, located 11 km north-east of the capital Tushpa (Van Fortress), announce that the rings

[2] For the definitions of 'boundary, frontier, border, borderlands', see Parker 2006, 79–81.
[3] Köroğlu 2005, 104; 2011, 16.
[4] Biscione *et al*. 2012, 64.
[5] Köroğlu 2005, 104.
[6] Although there were various similarities, such as in bronze artefacts, architectural elements (Tsetskhladze 2003, 230, 231, 236) or pottery (Tsetskhladze 1999, 481) this resemblance seems nothing more than the result of influence. What is more, as Parker (2006, 79) has touched on, it is difficult to confidently define territorial borders in many regions of ancient world.
[7] See Table 1 for the historical geography of the countries, cities and political entities referred to in the text.

had been taken away from the storerooms of a city called Utiruhi.[8] Utiruhi has been located by Diakonoff and Kashkai[9] in the Upper Araxes basin near Kağızman in Kars, and by Salvini[10] in an area south-east of the Araxes-Arpaçay junction (Fig. 1 and Table 1). In the regnal years of Ishpuini, then, a military expedition must have been directed towards a city called Utiruhi and the treasure rooms of the city (most likely belonging to the landlord or ruler) plundered.[11] This is the earliest reference to this septentrional region. The next attribution to the city occurred during the co-regency of Ishpuini and Minua. Surp Pogos,[12] Kasımoğlu[13] and Toprakkale[14] (Ağrı) inscriptions record Utiruhi as Uiteruhi, which was also associated with the cities Katarza and Lusha and the lands of Etiuhi/Etiuni (Fig. 1 and Table 1).

Upper Anzaf produced another set of votive rings presenting epigraphical evidence from the Ishpuini, Minua and Inushpua periods concerning the northern lands.[15] The inscription declares that the rings were taken away from the hostile city of Amusha, which must have been located to the south-east of Lake Sevan. The city would be mentioned again a century later, in the time of Argishti II. The reign of Minua is marked by several important military interventions against the North. Based on the Yazılıtaş inscriptions[16] to the north of Horosan and the inscription of Zivin[17] (Süngütaş) on the route between Kars and Erzurum, the first campaign was directed against Diauehi, which is generally accepted to have been in the area around Erzurum, and its capital Shashilu. The Taşburun[18] (Çölegert) and Başbulak[19] inscriptions of Minua indicate that the conquest of the land of Er(i)kuahi and its capital Luhiuni was

[8] Rings were yielded by a building with columns named the Grand Reception Hall. The inscription says: 'Through the protection of Haldi, Ishpuini, son of Sarduri, the great king, mighty king, king of all, king of the land of Nairi, brought this bibu arsenal(?) of the city of Utiruhi (Witeruhi) (or: he took away this votive object out of the storehouse of the city of Utiruhi), and dedicated it to Haldi, his Lord, for his life' (Belli *et al*. 2009, 91–93; *CTU* B 2-7 A, B, C, D, E).

[9] Diakonoff and Kashkai 1981, 102–03.

[10] Salvini 2002, 37.

[11] It is remarkable that the inscriptions on the rings are in the Assyrian language, which was used by the royal elites even after the Urartian language was adopted as an official language (Belli *et al*. 2009, 102). The inscription, which represents military activity, is also unusual for the fact that it is on a bronze votive ring rather than being a rock inscription.

[12] Another stele fragment in the Surp Pogos church refers to Sarduri II (*CTU* A 9-1). (*CTU* A 3-4).

[13] *CTU* A 3-5 rev.

[14] *CTU* A 3-7.

[15] Dinçol and Dinçol 1995, 30–31; *CTU* B 4-1 A, B, C, D (votive rings were discovered in a room located in the west courtyard of the temple area of the fortress).

[16] *CTU* A 5-3.

[17] *CTU* A 5-4.

[18] *CTU* A 5-1, 27.

[19] *CTU* A 5-26.

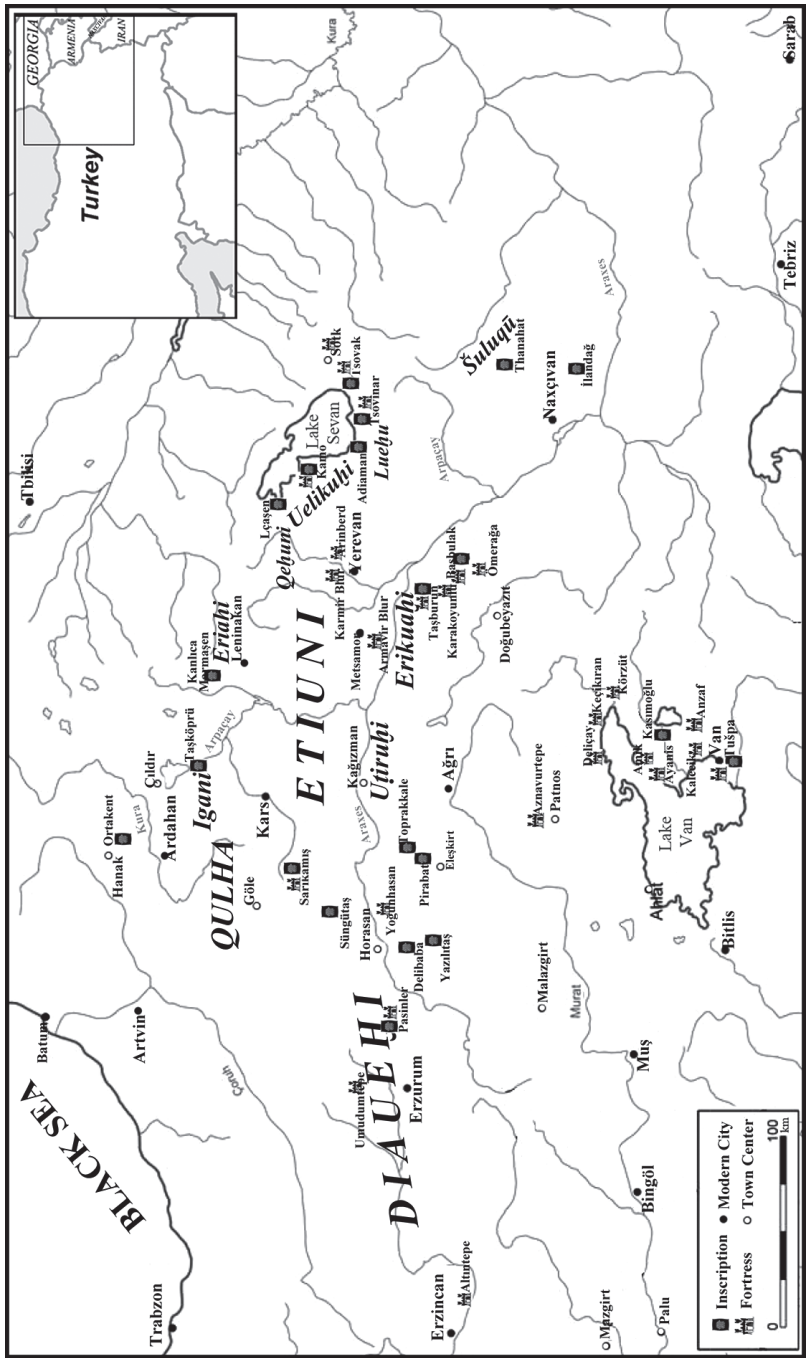

Fig. 1. Map of Urartu, showing ancient and modern settlements, fortresses, locations of inscriptions, etc.

another pivotal military step (Fig. 1 and Table 1). Following these achievements, very important arteries allowing access to the Ağrı plain, which offers fertile agricultural potential, must have been safeguarded by constructing the Minuahinili (Başbulak Kalesi) and Taşburun (Çölegert) fortresses.[20] Thus, Urartu was extended up to the lands south of Transcaucasia.

Table 1. Historical Geography in northern lands mentioned in the text.

Names of lands, cities and polities (on the basis of sequence in the text)	**Location**	**Literature**
Utiruhi city	The Upper Araxes basin near Kağızman in Kars	Diakonoff and Kashkai 1981, 102–03.
	In an area south-east of the Araxes-Arpaçay junction	Salvini 2002, 37.
Etiuhi/Etiuni	A wide area expending from Kars to west of Lake Sevan	Diakonoff and Kashkai 1981, 35; Salvini 2002, 37.
Amusha	South-east of Lake Sevan	Diakonoff and Kashkai 1981, 8, 77, 29, 44.
Land of Diauehi, cities of Shashilu and Zua	Erzurum district	Diakonoff and Kashkai 1981, 26, 79; Çilingiroğlu 1997, 32.
Erikuahi	South of the Araxes river, around Iğdır plain	Diakonoff and Kashkai 1981, 31–32.
Bia, Husha, Ashqalashi and Tariu	North of Lake Çıldır, around Hanak	Dinçol and Dinçol 1992, 109–11; Köroğlu 2001, 723.
Igani, Zabahae, Uzinabitarna, Sirimu	South-west of Lake Çıldır	Diakonoff and Kashkai 1981, 104, 97.
Eriahi	Around Leninakan, west bank of Arpaçay	Diakonoff and Kashkai 1981, 31; Salvini 2002, 51.
Qehuni	North-west of Lake Sevan, Hrazdan district	Diakonoff and Kashkai 1981, 66; Salvini 2002, 43.
Uelikuhi	Western shores of Lake Sevan: Kamo (Nor Bayazet)	Diakonoff and Kashkai 1981, 100; Barnett 1982, 348; Salvini 2002, 51.
Luehu and its capital Tulihu	South-west of Lake Sevan, around Adiaman village	Diakonoff and Kashkai 1981, 51, 85; Barnett 1982, 349; Hmayakyan, 278.
Lands of U(e)durietiuni union	West and south shores of Lake Sevan	Salvini 2002, 49; Biscione *et al.* 2003, 11.
Qulha	Göle district	Köroğlu 2001, 727–30; 2005, 105.
	Colchian kingdom in the south-eastern shore of Black Sea	Diakonoff and Kashkai 1981, 68–69.
Land of Suluqū and city of Irdua	Sisian district	Diakonoff and Kashkai 1981, 29, 77.

[20] Salvini 2002, 39.

The regnal years of Argishti I were the period in which Urartu accomplished through solid movements a permanent presence north of the Araxes. The king left concrete evidence such as the Hanak/Ortakent inscription[21] in the furthermost north, and the Marmaşen (Kanlıca) inscription,[22] which was a few kilometres away from Leninakan (Alexandrapol/Gümrü) (Fig. 1). The Horhor chronicles in Tushpa and the Sarıkamış inscriptions[23] provide significant information as to Argishti I's northern policy. Several more military exploits resulted in the collapse of the Diauehi kingdom.[24] Some inscriptions such as Ortakent, which conveys details of the campaign against Diauehi and its capture, make early mention of some local tribal units and lands[25] including Bia, Husha, Ashqalashi and Tariu (Table 1). In order to create the big picture of the sequence and interrelationship of military events, the Horhor and Ortakent inscriptions and the Surp Sahak[26] inscription, in which Shashilu and Zua within the country of Diauehi are noted, should be considered together, inasmuch as they provide information about victorious attacks against local powers including Zabahae, Uzinabitarna and Sirimu, along with Igani country near Lake Çıldır (Fig. 1). Argishti I seems to have directed his attention mainly towards areas north of the Araxes. Having conquered Eriahi around Leninakan, he marched to Qehuni and captured it, according to the Lchashen inscription. In order to subdue the rioters and persist in this district, he established important provincial centres; namely, Erebuni (Arin-Berd) Fortress[27] and Argishtihinili (Armavir). The military activities of Sarduri II in the north were no less than his predecessor's. Although the best-known records concerning his campaigns are the Analıkız[28] in Tushpa and Surp Pogos[29] inscriptions, the Taşköprü inscription[30] near Çıldır, Adiaman[31] (Atamhan) south of Lake Sevan, and the Tsovak[32] inscription also give details concerning the northern expansion of Urartu in the regnal years of Sarduri II. On the basis of the annals of Sarduri II, military campaigns to the lands of Igani, Eriahi and Daiuehi continued, and his activities were also directed north of Lake Çıldır and the Lake

[21] *CTU* A 8-7.
[22] *CTU* A 8-10.
[23] *CTU* A 8-6.
[24] *CTU* A 8-1 and 2.
[25] For detailed information on pastoral life in eastern Anatolia during the Iron Age, see Işıklı and Erdem 2009; Erdem 2011; 2018.
[26] *CTU* A 8-2.
[27] *CTU* A 8-1 obv.; *CTU* A 8-3 II.
[28] *CTU* A 9-3.
[29] *CTU* A 9-1.
[30] *CTU* A 9-5.
[31] *CTU* A 9-6.
[32] *CTU* A 9-7.

Sevan basin. The main objective, then, must have been to establish a firmer sovereignty over the territories that could not be administrated from the centre.[33] The texts of Sarduri II contain references to many lands and political entities which were formerly unknown, among which were Uelikuhi, which is located on the western shores of Lake Sevan, and Tulihu, the capital of Luehu, which was located in modern Martuni, based on the location of the Adiaman inscription (Fig. 1 and Table 1). The Tsovak inscription mentions countries such as Urtehi(ni), Arquqiuni, Lueruni and Kamaniu,[34] which were units of the U(e)durietiuni union, generally labelled a 'federation'.[35]

Likewise, the Tsovinar inscription records that many local tribal units within the U(e)durietiuni union were subjected to pressure and oppression. A country called Qulha and its capital Ildamusha were only mentioned once for all in the Analıkız inscriptions of the king in Tushpa.[36] The throne was inherited by his son Rusa I, whose northern activities are known from the Kamo[37] (Nor-Bayazet) and Tsovinar[38] inscriptions. Based on these inscriptions, his regnal years were marked by the events of re-establishing Urartian domination over the country of Uelikuhi and subduing '19 kings from that [the other] side of the lake on the high mountain'.[39] With fortresses that were founded in Tsovinar and Nor-Bayazet, an absolute hegemony seems to have been established in the region.[40]

Limited textual evidence in the era of Argishti II is an obstacle to understanding the exact nature of events concerning the northern policy of his kingdom. He appears to have struggled with Cimmerians from the North during quite a large part of his reign. One of the reasons for the establishment of Altıntepe Fortress in Erzincan must have been confrontations with these dangerous nomads (Fig. 1). On the Thanahat inscription on the stele[41] erected in the mountain pass of the Sisian district in Yerevan, Argishti II announces that he conquered the country of Suluqū and the city of Irdua. The same inscription records that he began marching towards Amusha city, about which we had information during the co-regency of Ishpuini, Minua and Inushpua. It is from

[33] Köroğlu 2005, 102.

[34] Biscione *et al*. 2002, 11.

[35] Hmayakyan (2002, 278–79), who studied the settlement patterns in the Lake Sevan basin, has classified these units into several groups.

[36] *CTU* A 9-3 III.

[37] *CTU* A 10-1.

[38] *CTU* A 10-2.

[39] Salvini 2002, 57.

[40] The Tsovinar inscription of the king runs as follows '… this fortress perfectly I built. I gave the name City of the storm god for the power of Biainili and the humiliation of the hostile country…'. In the inscription of Kamo (Nor-Bayazet) can be read: 'I built perfectly a Door of Haldi, for the power of Biainili and the humiliation of the hostile country…' (Salvini 2002, 55, 57).

[41] *CTU* A 11-3.

the temple inscription[42] of Ayanis Fortress that some considerable information about the northern countries in the years of Rusa II can be gathered. This inscription mentions lands associated with the North including Etiuni and Siluquni. Apart from having the function of averting the danger represented by the Scythians and Cimmerians, Teishebaini (Karmir-Blur) in Yerevan was of paramount importance to regulating economic and administrative networks in the region. Although the successors of Rusa II seem not to have left any inscriptions indicating military activities in the northern lands, the presence of their names on some metal artefacts and on rocks in the Karmir-Blur and Arin-Berd fortresses suggests that the region around the south and west of Lake Sevan was under the rule of Urartu in the late 7th century and early 6th centuries BC.

Potential of the Northern Lands

The reasons for these military exploits, which were carried out over nearly two centuries, and their results were vital to the survival of a territorial state. Lack of alternative sources of socio-economic yield and trade opportunities explains the aggressive nature of Urartu as an expansionist state. The northern lands must be considered on the basis of their potential to enrich fields of production, which can be divided into several categories such as agriculture, animal breeding, mining and labour. As a crucial factor in its expansion policy, the Urartian state had to manage economic input from more than one area. First of all, the northern regions are likely to have been reshaped by Urartian authorities on the basis of the agricultural, stock-breeding and mining potential of each. It would have been necessary, then, to achieve a balance in the extent of manpower to be employed in the various economic activity areas.[43] Inscriptions give not only the types of the tributes which were transferred to the centre of the kingdom, but also provide detailed statistical information; however, among these, there is no indication that any types of cereals were taken as tribute, instead unused or underused lands with agricultural potential were put under the plough and enriched by irrigation works.

Agriculture: To obtain surplus production, Urartian rulers must have embarked on a quest for usable agricultural lands. Lowlands between Iğdır-Ağrı and the Araxes have widespread cultivated areas and are valuable agriculturally, especially the riverine agricultural lands on the Araxes and its branches (Fig. 2).

[42] *CTU* A 12-1 VI.
[43] Ozan 2006, 36–37.

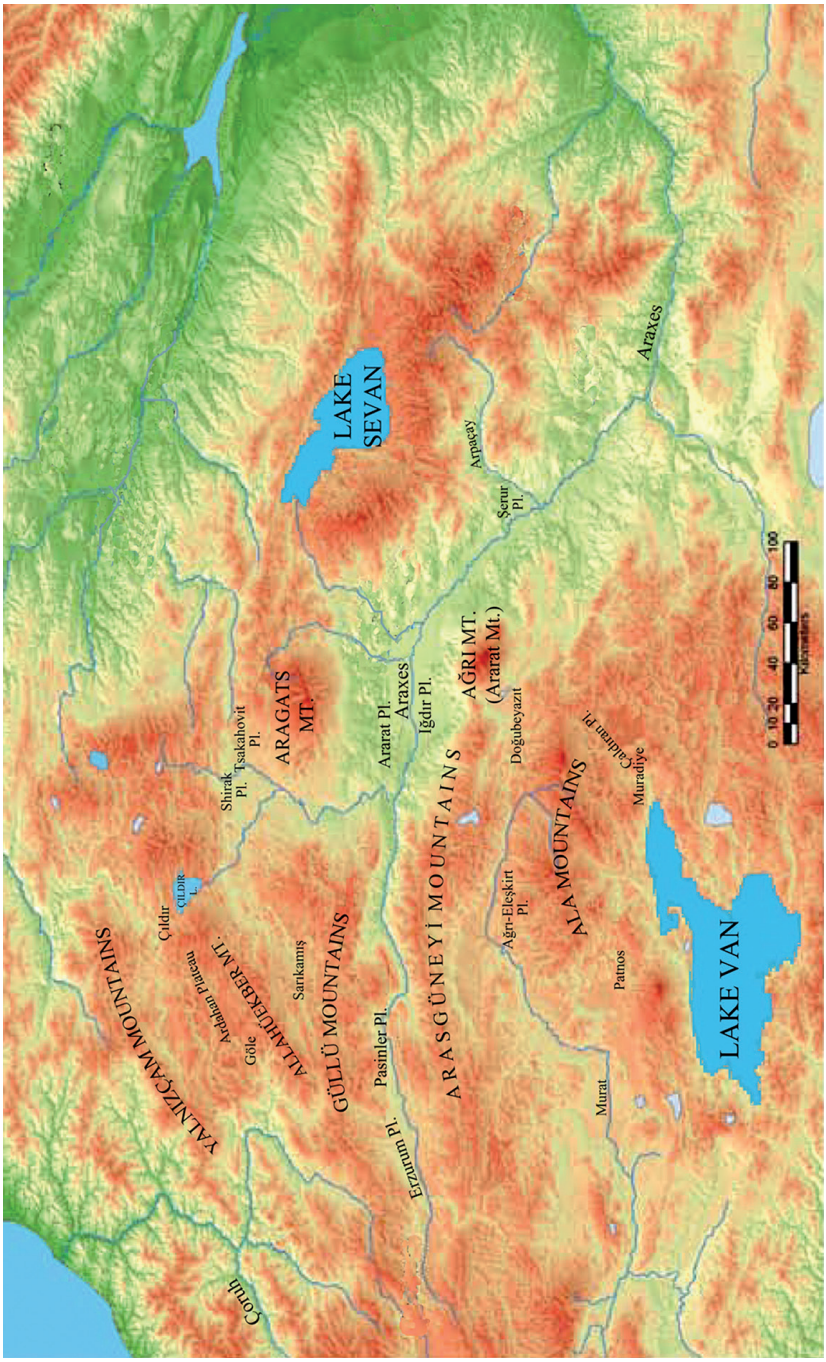

Fig. 2. Relief map of Urartu.

The dispersion pattern of the Pre-Urartian and Urartian constructions established around Mt Aragats and the Lake Sevan basin demonstrates that these fertile lands were of significance for Urartu.[44] While huge storage rooms, representing agricultural potential, have been attested in Argishtihinili, Erebuni and Teishebaini, which were distant from the heartland of Urartu, it is difficult to identify Urartian characteristics in rural areas far from provincial centres, such as Sos Höyük in Erzurum.[45]

Stock-breeding: Environmental factors must have played a pivotal role in the subsistence strategies which profoundly hinged on animal husbandry rather than large-scale agricultural activities. It can be easily seen from royal inscriptions that the number of animals transferred to Tushpa as booty and tribute was in the hundreds of thousands. From the period of Ishpuini onwards, animals such as horses, ovines and bovines seized as booty (Table 2) from the cities of Uiteruhi, Katarza and Lusha were mentioned in the inscriptions.[46]

Table 2. Numbers and natures of booty from northern land by Urartian kings.

Kings / ***Booty*** **(ca.)**	**Ispuini-Minua**	**Minua**	**Argishti I**	**Sarduri II**	**Rusa I**
Women Men Young Men Worrier Children (?)	3400	50,000	139,000	125,000	38,000
Ovines	20,800	150,350	337,000	340,000	-
Bovines	13,550	7650	161,000	95,000	
Horses	+	-	9000	7200	
Camels	-	-	-	115	
Gold	-	+	41 *minas*	-	-
Silver	-	+	37 *minas*		
Copper	-		10,000 *minas*		

[44] Biscione 2003; Badalyan and Avestiyan 2007; Smith *et al*. 2009.
[45] Sagona 1999, 153.
[46] *CTU* A 3–4, 5 and 7.

Abundant grazing lands around Erzurum mark this district as important in terms of stock-breeding.[47] Argishti I reported that in the course of his campaign against the furthermost northern areas, such as Ardahan and Çıldır districts, he seized '4426 horses, 14,478 bovines, 73,770 ovines'.[48] It is not surprising that he captured so many animals from this region alone, since rich pastures on plains such as Hanak, Göle and Çıldır are of great value in terms of animal husbandry (Fig. 2). Similarly, tall meadows on plateaux in Kars-Sarıkamış, south of the Allahüekber mountains, together with Göle and Çıldır, where the altitude is around 2000 m, are places well suited to stock-breeding.[49] In Tushpa, the Analıkız annals of Sarduri II state that a great number of animals were transported from these regions.[50] In the Tsakahovit plain facing Mt Aragats (Fig. 2), animal production is as significant today as it was in the past. Obviously the Iğdır plain-Araxes valley is suitable for animal husbandry and that must be the reason why it was recorded by Sarduri II that the animals seized during the campaign against Etiuni numbered approximately 8525 bovines and 18,000 ovines.[51] That it was possible to take this quantity of animals to the Urartian capital illuminates the potential of the region. It necessitated purging the people from the region and shifting them to another sector,[52] although the proportion of overall employment in the field of animal breeding would have been much less than in any other field of operation.

Mining: Mining was likely one of the leading occupations in the Urartian economy. Mining and metalworking (see Muscarella above in this volume) existed in the pre-Urartian as well as Urartian period as a source of income and prosperity. Activities and improvements in this field must have been applied more widely in order to meet needs including a) military equipment, such as arms and armour, b) implements for agricultural and construction activities, and c) the rising demands of elites. Apparently rich mineral deposits in the northern lands had already been in use before the Urartian invasions. The Sotk

[47] Yakar 2000, 388. It is striking that during the campaign to Diauehi, Argishti I not only seized 1000 horses, 300 bovines and 10,000 ovines, but he also ordered that animals be given as tribute annually (*CTU* A 8-2 obv.).

[48] *CTU* A 8 2 obv.

[49] Saraçoğlu 1989, 302, 303; Köroğlu 2001, 732.

[50] *CTU* A 9-3 II.

[51] The quantity of the animals given in these inscriptions must be more than reported when taking into account that a sheep with its lamb could be counted one. In the Ottoman period a 'sheep herd' consisted of 300 sheep and one sheep was imposed for each herd. Such a tax is not known, however, in the Urartian period (*CTU* A 9-3 I).

[52] Ozan 2006, 37.

gold mine[53] in the Sevan basin, for example, might have aroused the interest of Urartu. Excavations at Metsamor attested that metalworking centres there played an important role in mining and production activities from the Bronze Age onwards.[54] Mining activities require intense co-ordination and labour. Then, it is a necessity to have well-organised labour near ore deposits. The sole reference in the Surp Sahak and Horhor inscriptions of Argishti I to transferring output from precious mines relates to Erzurum district. The inscriptions clearly state that Argishti seized from Mannudibi, the king of Diauehi, 41 *minas* of gold, 37 *minas* of silver, and 10,000 *minas* of copper as booty, in addition to annual tribute of copper, gold, cattle and horses (Table 2). In particular, silver, lead, copper and iron reserves in the Erzincan–Erzurum–Bayburt–Gümüşhane–Artvin–Kağızman regions are thought to have been used in the Urartian period.[55]

Labour Force: Royal inscriptions assert that a great proportion of the population were expelled and deported to Urartian lands. It was population policy to deport people (Table 2) from captured lands to low population zones, with objectives including providing soldiers for the army or manpower for reconstruction, mining and other economic activities. The labour force, which is identified as men, women, young men or even children(?) in the Urartian royal inscriptions, probably originated in the time of the joint rule of Ishpuini and Minua. It was necessary to dissolve and reorganise the previously established system in order to serve the interests of Urartu during the reutilisation of conquered lands.[56] Settlement patterns must have been designed to serve such a purpose, as clearly indicated by irrigation works, storage facilities and agricultural tools from fortresses. Fortresses, which were founded on rocky outcrops rising high over the plain, were designed to store crops as well as to provide security. Since high employment in cultivated lands was the only way to increase agricultural capacity, a shift in population policy must have come into effect.

[53] Hmayakyan 2002, 282; Biscione *et al*. 2002, 12; Gevorkyan 2002, 455.

[54] Dézélus 1993; Barnett (1982, 342) suggests that Argishtihinili might have been constructed in order to keep Metsamor, which was a rich and very important metalworking region, under control.

[55] Belli 2004, 232.

[56] Ozan 2006, 37.

Links Between the Zones

Concerning networks of strategic points and regions, a policy of using natural routes and passes which allowed expansion further north was adopted persistently by the Urartian kingdom. These routes, over time, also played a major role in moving tributes back into the Urartian heartland.[57] The northward movement of Urartu must have been launched with three main targets beginning with the Utiruhi region, around Kağızman south of the Araxes, the Diauehi region in Erzurum, and regions between Ağrı and Aragats mountains and on the south and west coasts of Lake Sevan. As mentioned above, these three actions, which were based on economic and political factors, appear to have occurred either one after the other at intervals, or in a synchronised and sequential way. No matter what patterns were used, the departure point for the northern movement was, with great likelihood, the Muradiye plain, which is situated on the outbound route to Patnos and Çaldıran (Fig. 2). For example, Burney and Lawson[58] think that Aznavurtepe in Ağrı-Patnos, the fortress created by Ishpuini, was the base for military expeditions into the North.

The Çaldıran plain has an entry point to Doğubeyazıt, where archaeological evidence attributable to Urartu in the northern section of Ağrı, Iğdır and around the Araxes points to clear Urartian dominance. The Başbulak inscription of Minua, which notes the construction of fortresses between the Iğdır plain and the Araxes river, might also support the idea, considering that Başbulak (Minuahinili)[59] and Taşburun fortresses were Urartian (Fig. 1). In recent years, surveys carried out in the region by A. Özfırat have revealed many fortresses and necropoleis have yielded Urartian pottery, although in small quantities.[60] In this respect, Melekli (Lanetlitepe) and Bozkurt (Fortress II) are considered as outposts and/or road stations on both sides of the Mt Ağrı western pass. While Ömerağa (Gölyüzü) Fortress in Doğubeyazıt (Ağrı) was a central station located at the southern slope, Aktaş Fortress was a garrison-city on the northern slope of Mt Ağrı.[61] Karakoyunlu (Iğdır) in the northern foothills of Mt Ararat (Mt Ağrı) can be accepted as the most apparent defence or even administrative

[57] Slattery (1987) claims that those routes were used to reach up to the Black Sea for the purpose of trade.

[58] Burney and Lawson 1960, 192.

[59] Özfırat (2017a, 84; 2017b) notes that Karakoyunlu (Fortress II) is much more convenient for the localisation of Minuahinili and it can be considered as a single settlement because both sites are very close to each other.

[60] Özfırat 2013, 295; 2017a; 2017b.

[61] Özfırat 2017b.

points ascribed to Urartu.[62] On the way to the shores of Lake Sevan, important military points such as Argishtihinili, Teishebaini and Erebuni in the Ararat district, the Shirak and Araxes valleys are likely to have been passed (Figs. 1–2). Many fortresses have been attested on this route and beyond it. Lchashen, which was one of the furthest points of Urartian military and political control, was a block to entry towards Urartian central territory via the Lake Sevan basin from the north.[63]

Another itinerary which provides access to Sevan basin from the Urartian heartland is Patnos–Ağrı–Eleşkirt–Horasan–Zivin–Sarıkamış–Kars and Leninakan (Fig. 1). Using this route, Urartu would have trespassed on the territories of the kingdom of Diauehi. As has been noted, this conflict was resolved in favour of Urartu and the Erzurum district came under its rule.[64] In this respect, Umudumtepe, which was founded on a rocky spur overhanging the Erzurum plain, was an important location, being on the way to the Sevan basin.[65] Natural passes allow links into the Erzurum district from the Ağrı plain. The earliest evidence indicating the presence of Urartu in this region is the Delibaba inscription[66] in the Pasinler plain and the Hasankale[67] (Pasinler) inscription.[68] Hasankale Fortress was located on the main route, protecting a major pass. Furthermore, Slattery[69] suggests that the fortress was likely used as a launching point for military expeditions further north. To the east, one comes across Altıntepe Fortress in Erzincan which was probably established for the protection of the north-eastern region of Urartu. The Pasinler and Erzurum plains provided an *entrée* to the north-western frontier of the Urartian kingdom. In addition, the Pasinler plain reaches via natural routes up to Kars by way of Horasan. Sarıkamış[70] and Yoğunhasan[71] represent military establishments of Urartu in the region (Fig. 1).

The nature of the presence of the Urartian kingdom in the furthermost frontier zones, such as Ardahan and Kars, is open to question owing to the fact that only rather uncertain evidence has been attested.[72] From Sarıkamış one can

[62] Marro and Özfırat 2003, 395; Özfırat and Marro 2004, 20; Özfırat 2009, 351; 2012, 126–28; 2014; 2017a; 2017b.

[63] Slattery 1988, 178.

[64] Köroğlu (2001, 738, n. 99) notes that in the Erzurum district there are many fortresses and necropoleis which have been attributed to the Urartian period.

[65] Çilingiroğlu 1980, 191.

[66] *CTU* A 5-41A.

[67] *CTU* A 5-41B.

[68] Zimansky 1985, 25.

[69] Slattery 1988, 186.

[70] Sinclair 1987, 418.

[71] Belli and Ceylan 2002, 119.

[72] Köroğlu 2001, 733–35; 2005, 103, 104.

reach up to the Lake Çıldır basin through Kars. The presence of Urartu in Taşköprü Fortress, which is located just south of Lake Çıldır, is questionable.[73] Although a small quantity of pottery suggests an Urartian presence,[74] no further evidence has been attested to date to show that the Urartians settled in the Ardahan plateau and north of Lake Çıldır (Fig. 1). Therefore, the reason why the Urartians went to those locations must have been related to providing a defence network for the Urartian lands by forming a buffer zone[75] against nomadic tribes[76] from the North. Finally, north-western areas including the Şərur plain in Nakhchıvan (Figs. 1 and 2) require much more comprehensive research to prove the existence of Urartu there. Although Urartian cultural marks can be traced at Oğlankale,[77] and fortresses[78] such as Sederekkale, Kızkale 1–2 and Karasukale show some potential in this regard, more precise evidence indicating Urartian political activities in the region is required.

As has been seen almost every single Urartian king had showed interest to the northern lands. They had an enough time, ability, power and creativity in order to rule in there. Although all above-mentioned information is only what we could see, the more accurate authenticity and details must be much deeper than this, as is in every section of archaeology. What is certain is that more intensive and wide range researches to be carry out in north-eastern Anatolia will provide further aspects of northern expansion of Urartu for scholars interested in Urartian archaeology.

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[73] Based on the survey of Köroğlu (1999, 147), Urartian pottery could not be attested around the fortress.

[74] Köroğlu (1998, 139) in particular mentioned Urartian pottery in the Tepeler mound in Ardahan.

[75] Ozan 2006, 38–39.

[76] Çilingiroğlu 1997, 38.

[77] Certain architectural features, the existence of red polished pottery and scribal evidence on pithoi from Oğlankale may point to a connection with Urartu. In recent years, research in the Arpaçay valley which shows the Urartian fortress near Getap along the Arpaçay (Melkonyan *et al*. 2010), south of the Selim Pass, has suggested that the Arpaçay route may be have been used by the Urartians (Ristvet *et al*. 2012, 333, 335, 344–45, 356–57).

[78] Parker 2012, 100–02.

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THE WESTERN EXPANSION OF THE URARTIAN KINGDOM

Kemalettin KÖROĞLU

Abstract

Western expansion of the Urartian kingdom concerns the region between the Bingöl mountains and the Euphrates, and the relationship between the Late Hittite city-states and the Neo-Assyrian kingdom. The Urartian kingdom first stretched beyond the Bingöl mountains during the reign of Minua and, having settled the region, built its first provincial centre in Palu. Urartu continued its political and cultural relations with the local populations in the West as well as Miliṭia/Melid, Qumaha/Kummuh, Tablani/Tabal and Assyria until the middle of the 7th century BC. Of the numerous studies that directly concern Urartu's western expansion, the early ones treated this subject within the framework of Urartian-North Syrian/Late Hittite relations, mostly using written sources. Excavations and surveys carried out in the Keban and Karakaya dam regions provided archaeological evidence for the Urartian presence in this region. Important Urartian cuneiform inscriptions and fortresses in the region had already been known since the 19th century. All these finds reinforced the view that Urartu had a powerful presence in the West, bordered by the Euphrates valley. The situation in the West, however, appears contrary to what Urartian inscriptions would have us believe, and re-assessing all these archaeological remains, previously associated with Urartians without much debate, will change our views. The western expansion of Urartu seems to be difficult to understand if just the evidence from Urartu is considered. This is because the region that Urartu claims to rule in the West is a neighbour to the Late Hittite kingdoms and the Assyrian provincial centres south of the Taurus mountain range. For this reason, the western expansion of Urartu should be traced in association with the developments in the Assyrian provincial centres controlling the Upper Tigris region.

INTRODUCTION

Westward expansion of the Urartian kingdom encompasses activities in the region between the Bingöl mountains and the Euphrates, and the relationship between the Late Hittite city-states and the Neo-Assyrian kingdom (Fig. 1). The earlier studies concerning Urartu's western expansion, the early ones treated this subject within the framework of Urartian-North Syrian/Late Hittite relations, mostly using written sources.[1] Excavations carried out in the Keban and Karakaya dam regions, and especially the Urartian building unearthed at

[1] Salvini 1972; Çilingiroğlu 1984.

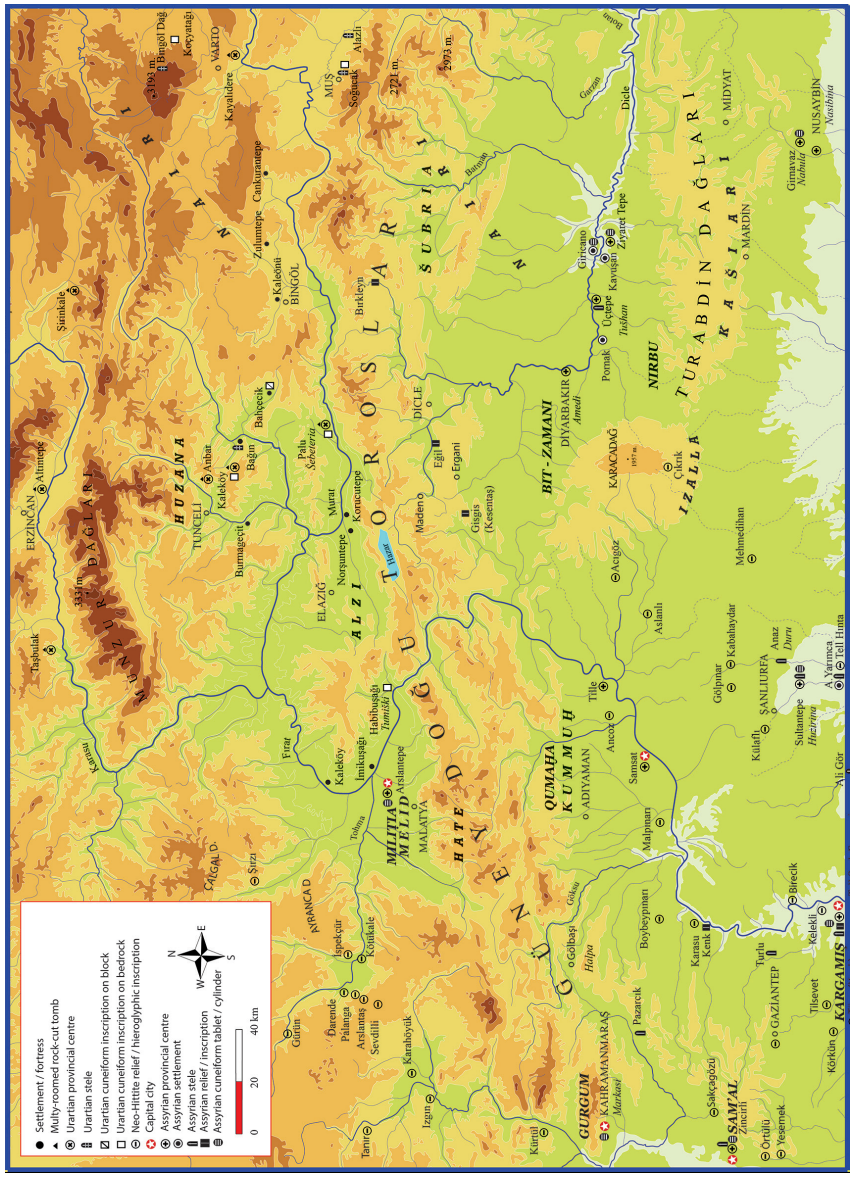

Fig. 1. Urartian western border region and neighbouring areas.

the south terrace at Norşuntepe in Elazığ/Altınova, provided archaeological evidence for the Urartian presence in this region.[2] Important Urartian cuneiform inscriptions and fortresses, such as those at Palu, Mazgirt-Kaleköy, Bağın and Habibuşağı (İzoli), have already been known since the 19th century. Archaeological surveys directed by Sevin in 1986–87 in the province of Elazığ, Tunceli and Bingöl revealed many more Iron Age centres. As a result of these studies, all rock-cut tombs, steps cut in the rock/foundations of the walls, stepped tunnels, fortress related to the above, and the remnants of a road/highway between Muş and Elazığ were considered to be surviving Urartian remains.[3] Later discoveries of Bahçecik[4] and the temple wall inscription in Ayanis, which refer to the West, added to the debate and reinforced the view that Urartu had a powerful presence in the West, bordered by the Euphrates valley.[5] The situation in the West, however, appears contrary to what Urartian inscriptions would have us believe, and re-assessing all these archaeological remains, previously associated with Urartians without much debate, will change our views.

The western expansion of Urartu seems to be difficult to understand if just the evidence from Urartu is considered. This is because the region that Urartu claims to rule in the West is a neighbour to the Late Hittite kingdoms and the Assyrian provincial centres south of the Taurus mountain range. The area where Assyria is closest to Urartu, and perhaps the area where they most affected each other, is the Elazığ/Alzi region (Fig. 1). For this reason, the western expansion of Urartu should be traced in association with the developments in the Assyrian provincial centres controlling the Upper Tigris region.

Early Campaigns against the West: First Contact with Militia and the Neo-Assyrian Kingdom

The Urartian kingdom's expansion westwards, to beyond the Bingöl mountains, began towards the end of the 9th century BC with king Minua (810–785/780 BC). The policy of expansion against selected targets in the West appears to have continued along the same lines during the reign of Argishti I (785/780–756 BC).

[2] Hauptmann 1969–70; Kleiss and Hauptmann 1976.
[3] Sevin 1988b; 1991; Köroğlu 1996.
[4] Payne and Sevin 2001.
[5] Kosyan 2010; Dan 2012.

Two of the four inscriptions describing Minua's activities were found in the central region, in Patnos and Van, while the other two were found in the West, in Palu and Bağın. The Aznavurtepe inscription states that Minua conquered the cities of Alzi and Qutume in the West, and stresses that he had a fortress built in Qutume.[6] A stele from the annals of Minua, found on the wall of Surp Pogos Church in Van, gives the names of the cities and lands of Alzi, Hatti, Tarhigama and Shada'ali, which were captured or plundered in the West. Interestingly, the stele refers to the city of Ishala and the land of Assur, suggesting that they might have passed south of the Taurus range.[7]

As evidence of Urartian activities in the West the inscription on the rock at the fortress of Palu (Figs. 2–3) records the capture of Shebeteria, Huzana and Supa and the imposition of tribute on the kingdom of Militia (*Melid*/*Malatya*).[8] An *ex-situ* stele discovered at a mediaeval fortress in Bağın gives the name of Titia, an administrator appointed over the region at that time.[9]

Fig. 2. Palu, Urartian provincial centre and River Murat.

[6] *CTU* A 5-11A.
[7] Schäfer 1973–74; *CTU* A5-9.
[8] *CTU* A5-5.
[9] *CTU* A5-8.

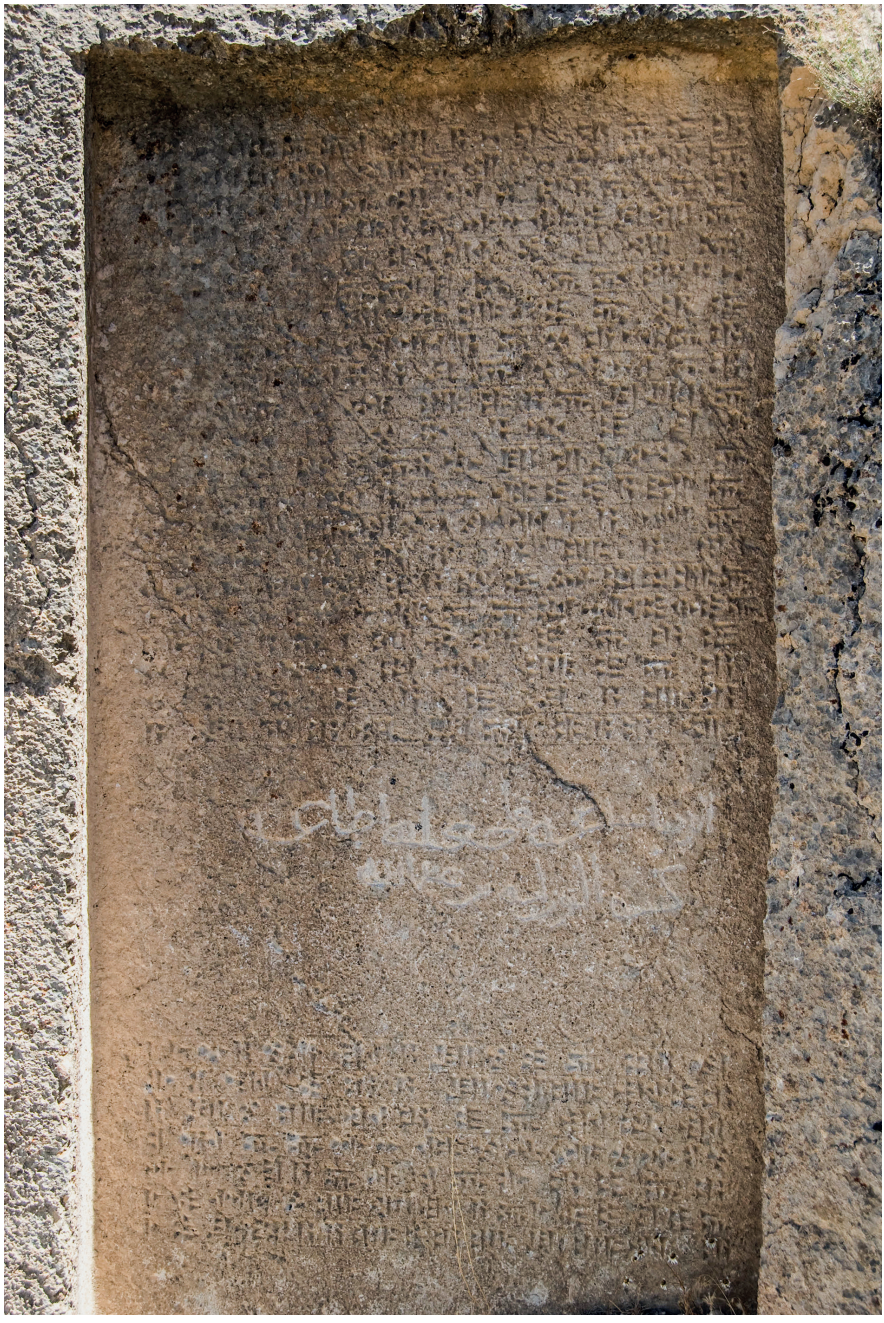

Fig. 3. Urartian inscription at Palu.

The settlements referred to in these inscriptions of the early campaign(s) seem related to four separate regions. Alzi, Shebeteria, Huzana, Qutume and Supa are to be sought in Elazığ and its immediate environs.[10] Supa is localised to the vicinity of Alzi, owing to its relation with Tumishki and similarity with Sophene.[11] There is no reliable evidence for the localisation of Shebeteria to Palu or of Huzana to Hozat (which may offer a toponymic similarity). Qutume, where the Urartians built a fortress, is among the names mentioned in inscriptions but it has so far not been identified. The locations of places and finds, such as the Palu Fortress and inscription, the Bağın inscriptions and Burmageçit, suggest that construction facilities concentrated on the north of the River Murat during the reign of Minua (see map).

Hatti and Militia are two names indicating a second point of contact in the time Minua. There is no doubt that Militia, with Arslantepe as its capital, is the kingdom referred to in the Neo-Assyrian texts as Melid.[12] There is indirect evidence, which we will mention below, suggesting that, when Urartu was expanding westwards, the kingdom of Militia's ruling area spread towards the east of the Euphrates. The Elazığ region is known to have been under the influence of the Hittite culture also during the Late Bronze Age. We argue that the name Hatti was used to define both the west of the Euphrates and the Elazığ region to the east during the Urartian expansion period.

The names in the third group are discussed as evidence to Minua's passage to the west of the Euphrates. Of the two names mentioned in the annals of Minua, Tarhigama and Shada'ali, the first is localised to Gürün due to its similarity to Tegarama in Hittite texts. If this suggestion is accepted, it means that the Urartian army crossed the Euphrates and reached as far as Gürün, following the course of the Tohma valley.[13] This localisation and evaluation appear unlikely, however. As clearly expressed in the Izoli inscription, the Euphrates had not been crossed over by any Urartian king until the reign of Sarduri II, Minua's grandson.

Ishala and Assur, which can be taken as references to the fourth area of action mentioned in Minua's inscriptions, indicate south of the Taurus, in the Upper Tigris region. The basis for this argument is the suggestion that, based on Neo-Assyrian inscriptions, Ishala is Izalla,[14] located immediately to the south of the modern Karacadağ (Fig. 1) and Tur Abdin mountains.[15]

[10] Russell 1984; Köroğlu 1996, 55–62.
[11] Salvini 1972; Köroğlu 1996, 62–64.
[12] Hawkins 2000, 288–329; Liverani 2012a; 2012b.
[13] Salvini 1995, 49–55.
[14] Parpola and Porter 2001, map 3.
[15] Diakonoff and Kashkai 1981, 45; *CTU* A5-9.

The Upper Tigris region became an Assyrian territory in the early 9th century BC during the reigns of Assurnasirpal II (883–859 BC) and Shalmaneser III (858–824 BC) with the founding of Tushhan (Üçtepe) and Amedi (Diyarbakır).[16] It is understood, however, that Assyrian prospects did not appear to be good in these provinces by the time Minua began his campaigns against the West. Assyrian inscriptions provide clues that the impacts of a mutiny orchestrated by provincial governors during the last years of Shalmaneser III's rule continued until the reign Tiglath-pileser III (744–727 BC).[17] Archaeological data from numerous centres in the Upper Tigris region, primarily from Üçtepe and Ziyaret Tepe, indicate that provincial centres founded in the 9th century BC were abandoned towards the end of the century.[18] This explains the Urartian army's actions in the entire Upper Tigris region as far as Ishala/Izalla (Fig. 1). Urartu seems to have turned Assyria's internal conflicts to its own advantage.

The period of conflict and decline in the Neo-Assyrian kingdom, which began towards the end of the 9th century BC and lasted until the mid-8th century BC, appears to have paved the way for more powerful Urartu and Late Hittite states. Indeed, Argishti I, who succeeded Minua, campaigned in the West and continued with the expansion goals. Argishti I's western activities are mentioned in the third year of his annals, found at the entrance of his tomb in the Van Fortress.[19] Interestingly, Minua's goals are emphasised within the context of his campaign to the West. The first goal is, once again, Hate land, the city of Militia and (king) Hilaruada. It is quite dubious as to whether Argishti I, like his father Minua, crossed the Euphrates. The message relayed by Urartu records is that Hilaruada, the king of Militia, preserved his position on the condition of paying tribute. As far as it can be discerned from the Habibuşağı inscription, Hilaruada is the king of Militia who secured an agreement with Urartu also after Argishti I's reign, during the time of Sarduri II.

The second objective was the land of Tuate and its population. The name Tuate is equated with Tuwatis, king of Tabal, whose name appears on 8th-century hieroglyph inscriptions.[20]

[16] Köroğlu 1998; 2015.
[17] Grayson 1982, 268, 273, 276; Radner 2016.
[18] Köroğlu 2018.
[19] *CTU* A 8-3.
[20] Hawkins 2000, 21; Weeden 2010.

The third goal mentioned in the annals of Argishti I is related with the name Niriba. As both Çilingiroğlu[21] and Salvini[22] indicate, if Niriba is the same place as Nirbu (Fig. 1) in the Upper Tigris region,[23] then the Urartian army may have entered Assyrian lands in this period as well. The same year, in addition to the booty, a large deportation programme relocated many people of the Supa land, among whom 6600 people were sent to Er(e)buni, founded later in the Transcaucasus.

The Changing Balance of Power West of the Euphrates and Conflict with Assyria: The Reign of Sarduri II (756–730?)

During the reign of Sarduri II, who succeeded Argishti I, Urartian armies crossed the Euphrates and began to increase their influence in the region of Late Hittite kingdoms. Urartu continued to exert its power up until the accession of Tiglat-pileser III to the Assyrian throne (744 BC). The power relation was reversed following the Assyrian king's accession.

Urartian written sources refer to at least two campaigns against Militia and Qumaha/Kummuh, west of the Euphrates during the reign of Sarduri II. The Urartian army penetrated to the Upper Tigris region in this period as well. As during the reigns of Minua and Argishti I, the first campaign mentioned in Sarduri's annals in Van[24] as well as on the Habibuşağı inscription, is against Militia (Malatya). The fact that, in the annals, this event appears in the paragraph immediately after the one that refers to his accession to the throne suggests that the event took place in the early years of his reign (753/2 BC).[25] The Habibuşağı inscription, which describes this campaign in more detail, emphasises certain aspects relevant to Urartu's western expansion, the first of which are the lines about how the Urartian king crossed the Euphrates: 'The Euphrates (^{ID}pu-ra-na-di) was a clean place, there was not any king who from there had crossed over … I crossed over among the soldiers in front of Tumishki.'[26]

The name of the Euphrates is mentioned for the first time in Urartian texts and it is particularly emphasised that no other Urartian king had crossed the river before. After the crossing, 14 fortresses, 80(?) settlements and Hilaruada's royal city of Sasi were raided, and 50 chariots seized. The capital, however,

[21] Çilingiroğlu 1984, 18.
[22] Salvini 1985, map 1.
[23] Köroğlu 1998, 96, 106.
[24] *CTU* A 9-1.
[25] Salvini 1995, 77.
[26] van Loon 1974, 189.

was not touched, the raiders being satisfied with the gold, silver and goods taken as tribute.[27] It appears that the kingdom of Militia, although waning, still persevered.

Another significant detail in the Habibuşağı inscription relates to the situation of nine cities that defected from the Militian kingdom to join Urartu. These were Haza, Gaurahi, Tumishki, 'Asi, Maninu, Arusi, Qulbitarri, Tashe (Tashe of Quera) and Meluia.[28] It is difficult to identify their locations. The army crossed the Euphrates from in front of Tumishki; this leads to an identification of the fortress with Habibuşağı on the eastern shore, where also an inscription was found. Considering the similarity of the names Haza and Huzana/Hozat, it can be said that at least both of these places were to the east of the Euphrates. The fact that the Euphrates poses a difficult barrier and forms a natural border suggests that the remaining cities were also on the eastern side of the river.[29] Before Sarduri, the kingdom of Militia is understood to have ruled in the east of the Euphrates, in some parts of the Elazığ region. This reinforces the argument that the references to Minua and Argishti I's campaigns against the land of Hate and Militia could also refer to the east of the Euphrates, to the Elazığ region.

The fortress unearthed in the sixth building layer of İmikuşağı during the archaeological excavations carried out as part of the Karakaya dam project,[30] and Kaleköy,[31] are dated to the Middle Iron Age. Also, in both fortresses, pottery from the west of the Euphrates,[32] as evidence of cultural interaction, is more prominent than those of the east, i.e. Urartu. As a result, it would not be wrong to assume that these fortresses along the Euphrates were among the nine settlements that defected from the kingdom of Militia to join Urartu. With this campaign of Sarduri II, the western boundary of the kingdom of Urartu extended to the Euphrates for the first time.

According to the annals in Van, Sarduri II's second campaign to the west of the Euphrates was against the kingdom of Qumaha (Kummuh in Assyrian inscriptions, Commagene in Greek sources). As in the Militia campaign, Samsat, the capital, was not attacked, but some of the important cities, Uita, Halpa and Parala, were ransacked, and a tribute was imposed on the king Kushtashpili.[33]

[27] *CTU* A 9-4.
[28] van Loon 1974; *CTU* A 9-4.
[29] Salvini 1972.
[30] Sevin 1995, 31.
[31] Bakır 2007.
[32] Ökse 1988.
[33] *CTU* A 9-3 IV.

Urartian inscriptions, though obscure, imply that Sarduri II, just like Minua and Argishti I, might have campaigned in the Upper Tigris region. Arme and Nihiria, mentioned in Sarduri's annals,[34] and in the Bahçecik inscription mentioned below, are localised to the south of the Taurus, in the Upper Tigris region.[35]

The recently discovered Elazığ/Bahçecik inscription concerns a governor named Zaiani, whom Urartu appointed to the western region.[36] Certain local power centres, which the Urartian army had reached in the western Euphrates and the Upper Tigris region, such as Militia, Qumaha, Arme, Nihria and Hashime, were named while drawing the governor's administrative remit.

Urartian inscriptions do not mention a third campaign of Sarduri II against the Late Hittite region west of the Euphrates. Assyrian records dating to the time of Tiglath-pileser III give details of a battle with Sarduri II in Kummuh. The Assyrian king included Arpad, Gurgum, Kummuh and Melid as adversaries in his campaign to stop the Urartians advance.[37]

The war waged in Kummuh, near Kishtan and Halpi (modern Gölbaşı), between a coalition under the leadership of Urartu and Assyria was won by the latter. Amidst great loss, Sarduri II retreated as far as 'the Euphrates, the boundary of his lands'.[38] This event appears to have halted Urartian advances in the West, which began during Minua's reign. In the aftermath, Tiglath-pileser III began the process of establishing provincial centres west of the Euphrates.[39] The initial policy of pressure by Shalmaneser III (854–824 BC), who had the reliefs at Ferhatlı/Uzunoğlan[40] and Kenk Gorge[41] engraved, involved turning regional kingdoms into vassals, and extorting taxes, but a century later this appears to have given way to a policy that aimed at direct control.

Tiglat-pileser III did not conclude his war with Urartu with this battle. In the eleventh year of his reign (735 BC), he advanced into the heart of Urartu and besieged the capital Tushpa.[42] A quite assertive but short inscription at Nimrud emphasises that Enzi (the Elazığ region) was annexed to Assyria's Nairi province as far as the land of Supa.[43] Thus for the first time it is claimed that

[34] *CTU* A 9-1 ld.
[35] Diakonoff and Kashkai 1981, 11, 85.
[36] Payne and Sevin 2001; *CTU* A 9-18.
[37] Astour 1979; Millard 1994; Tadmor and Yamada 2011, nos. 9, 35.
[38] Tadmor, Yamada 2011, no. 35.
[39] Postgate 1995.
[40] Taşyürek 1975.
[41] Taşyürek 1979.
[42] Tadmor and Yamada 2011, no. 41.
[43] Tadmor and Yamada 2011, nos. 39, 49.

a piece of Urartian territory north of the Taurus range had been annexed to Assyria. This new arrangement, however, does not appear to be sustainable, considering the mountains in between prevented effective Assyrian control.

Urartian inscriptions do not mention the western border region of Urartu after the reign of Sarduri II until the reign of Rusa son of Argishti in the first half of the 7th century BC. Letters during the time of Assyrian king Sargon II (721–705 BC), however, reveal tensions and conflicts in the whole of the Taurus mountain region along the Urartian-Assyrian border from west to east.[44] Many letters emphasise the relations of Urartu and Shupria, the latter a semi-independent polity in the Taurus mountains in the Upper Tigris region, and the rising problems.[45] An Urartian provincial administrator named Siplia in Alzi appears in one of these letters, suggesting that Urartu's western border region was once again under control.[46]

During the reign of Sargon II, the Assyrian kingdom made great effort to consolidate its presence and settle in the west of the Euphrates and to turn the Late Hittite states into provincial centres. It appears that, for the first time, Melid, Urartu's western neighbour, entered Assyrian rule, albeit briefly. Other than an inscribed cylinder, however, evidence that might support this assumption, such as architectural remains or finds associated with daily life, have not been published.[47] If it is accepted that Assyria reached as far north as the northern Taurus, Urartu had, for the first time, acquired a border drawn by the Euphrates and Assyria.

The Period of Rusa (II?) Son of Argishti (First Half of the 7th century BC)

It is known that the Urartian kingdom realised major projects in the Lake Van basin, Aras valley and north-western Iran, again during the reign of Rusa son of Argishti. Although a city-scale construction project in this border region is not known, various new arrangements took place. Inscriptions found in Adilcevaz Kef Kalesi, Ayanis and Mazgirt-Kaleköy (Figs. 5–7) provide some clues of a continuing traditional western policy, which had been implemented until the period of Sarduri II.

[44] Lanfranchi and Parpola 1990, nos. 1–20.
[45] Lanfranchi and Parpola 1990, nos. 24, 31–35, 52–53.
[46] Lanfranchi and Parpola 1990, no. 87.
[47] Liverani 2012a.

The Adilcevaz Kef Kalesi inscription, in its account of Rusa II's campaign to the West, refers to the relocation of certain people to the western border region from the lands of Mushki, Hate, Halitu and Tablani.[48] Similarly, the Ayanis inscription, in its description of enemy lands, mentions Tablani, Hate and Mushki in the West.[49] It is clear that, in this period, Hate lands signified Militia/Melid and its vicinity for Urartu. Oracle reports dating to the period of Esarhaddon, the Assyrian king who was Rusa's contemporary, state that Melid became independent once again around 680 BC, after a brief period of Assyrian rule.[50]

The history of Mushki in Alzi (Elazığ) and its environs goes back to pre-Urartian times. According to Middle Assyrian inscriptions, which mention their name for the first time, this population lived in Alzi and the upper Tigris region, and spread to the west of the middle Euphrates basin into the Late Hittite territory in the 7th century BC.[51] The extensively damaged Mazgirt inscription (Fig. 7) does not provide details apart from a name restored by Salvini as Supa.[52] A 7th-century BC mansion and other finds unearthed in the southern terrace of Norşuntepe[53] are indicative of Urartu's settlement in the Elazığ plain, where it left a more prominent mark than in the century before.

As part of its interest to the south of the Taurus range, the Urartian kingdom, during the period of Rusa son of Argishti, directed its attention to Shupria, a buffer state between Assyria and Urartu (Fig. 1). Records dating to the period of Esarhaddon[54] name Shubria, with its important cities Uppumu and Kullimeri, as one of the regions against which Urartu could carry out campaigns.[55]

Urartu's Cultural Presence in the West

Early Iron Age populations, represented by 'grooved ware', existed in Elazığ and its environs before the Urartian kingdom. Traces of this population were identified on top of Late Bronze Age layers in numerous mounds (höyük) excavated in the Keban and Karakaya regions, primarily in Korucutepe and Norşuntepe. The extent of this culture comprises the borders of the Urartian

[48] *CTU* A 12-4.
[49] *CTU* A 12-1.
[50] Starr 1990, nos. 1–12.
[51] Kopanias 2015.
[52] Schäfer 1977; *CTU* A 12-6.
[53] Hauptmann 1969–70.
[54] Starr 1990, no. 18.
[55] Kessler 1995.

state and its environs, eastern Anatolia, north-western Iran and the Upper Tigris region.[56] Urartu's settlement in Elazığ and its environs did not bring an end to the local cultures. A dominant Urartian cultural impact cannot be distinguished in the Urartian centres in Elazığ and its environs. The most apparent features that identify with Urartu, and which were transferred to the provincial centres from the Van region, are multi-chambered rock-cut tombs, cuneiform inscriptions, red slip ware as well as bronze belts and decorative pins.

Provincial centres: The names of at least three provincial governors, appointed from the centre to the western border region of Urartu, appear on written documents: Titia, during the period of Minua; Zaiani, under Sarduri II; and Siplia, towards the end of the 8th century BC. We have more plausible evidence about Palu and Mazgirt-Kaleköy, where the governors may have had their regional centres, and which remained in the provincial system from at least the end of the 9th century BC until the mid-7th century BC. The presence of multi-chambered rock-cut tombs – one of the primary features/criteria of the Urartian kingdom – form the basis of their analysis.[57]

In Palu (Figs. 2–4), three rock tombs, an inscription dating to the time of Minua's, and a moat built to enhance the defence of the citadel are quite characteristic of the Urartian period.[58] Although there is not enough information about the remains of the Mazgirt-Kaleköy fortress (Figs. 5–7), the presence of a double-chambered rock-cut tomb and an inscription of Rusa son of Argishti[59] form the main justifications for the assumption that this may have been an administrative centre.[60] The abundant metal finds from Tunceli Burmageçit[61] might presage the existence of other centres in this under-researched region.

Local Rulers' Mansions: The buildings discovered during archaeological excavation at Giriktepe,[62] Yoncatepe and Norşuntepe[63] show similarities with their 1500–2000 m^2 area and courtyard, storage, kitchen and workshop units.

[56] Bartl 2001; Köroğlu 2003.
[57] Köroğlu 2011, 35–45; 2012.
[58] Sevin 1994; Köroğlu 1996, 36–39.
[59] Schäfer 1977; Öğün 1978.
[60] The two-room rock-cut tomb and the fortress in Taşbulak, north of the Munzur mountains, might denote the westernmost provincial centre of Urartu (Topaloğlu 2012). It is understood that many fortresses dated to the Urartian period in the regions of Elazığ and Tunceli, including Harput and Bağın, on the basis of rock steps, stepped tunnels and single-chambered rock-cut tombs (Köroğlu 1996, 35–47; Çevik 2000), might actually be post-Urartian (Köroğlu 2007).
[61] Yıldırım 1991; Belli 1993.
[62] Balkan 1964.
[63] Hauptmann 1969–70.

Fig. 4. Urartian multi-roomed rock-cut tomb at Palu.

Fig. 5. Urartian provincial centre at Mazgirt-Kaleköy (photograph by E. Konyar).

Fig. 6. Urartian rock-cut tomb at Mazgirt-Kaleköy (photograph by E. Konyar).

Fig. 7. Kaleköy inscription (photograph by E. Konyar).

All three of these buildings were constructed at high altitudes in association with village settlements. None had peripheral walls. Architecture and small finds indicate that they may have belonged to administrators. We think that each of these three structures might have been residences of local administrators/rulers ruling societies who had been settled in the area by deportation.[64] The Kaleönü building, discovered during archaeological surveys on the Bingöl plain, displays similarities with this group in terms of its location, plan and dimensions. Among the pottery finds in its vicinity, storage vessel fragments with triangular and rectangular impression are similar to those very commonly observed in the storages of Urartu.[65] All these building are dated to the 7th century BC, to the period of Rusa II, a time when Urartu had regained power.

Van–Malatya Highway: There are not many alternatives to the highway that the Urartian kingdom might have used for its campaigns against the West, which stretched as far as the kingdom of Melid, from the 9th century BC onwards. The locations of administrative centres such as Kayalıdere and Palu suggest that the route of the modern highway connecting Elazığ and Malatya, and crossing the Bingöl range, was used by the Urartians as well. In fact, the section between Kayalıdere and Palu is very hostile in terms of transport due to mountains that sometimes reach altitudes of 2000 m. Centres discovered along this road, such as Cankurtarantepe, Zulümtepe, Kaleönü and Bahçecik, were identified by many scholars as part of an Urartian road system, to which Palu and Norşuntepe were also added.[66] Some of these centres, however, appear to have been established at different times to serve different purposes. The earliest centre along this route, which according to an inscription is understood to have been founded as a provincial centre during the time of Minua, is the Palu Fortress. The mansion of administrators found in Bingöl/Kaleönü and on a mound in Norşuntepe in the Far West are dated to the 7th century BC. The building in Bahçecik, according to its *ex-situ* inscription, belongs to the period of Sarduri II.[67]

[64] Köroğlu 2009.
[65] Sevin 1988a; 1989.
[66] Sevin 1988b; 1991; Köroğlu 1996, 26–32; Dan 2012.
[67] The necessary finds to date, as well as to debate the functions of, Zulümtepe and Cankurtarantepe can only be acquired through archaeological excavation. In my opinion, it is quite difficult to date the remains of the road, claimed to be Urartian (Sevin 1991, 102–04), that runs parallel to the modern highway in the Bingöl Mountains.

Conclusion

The Urartian kingdom spread westwards beyond the Bingöl mountains for the first time during the reign of Minua, and having settled in the region, it built its first provincial centre in Palu. Urartu continued its political and cultural relations with the local populations in the West as well as Militia/Melid, Qumaha/Kummuh, Tablani/Tabal and Assyria. Before Sarduri II's reign, a part of the Elazığ plain is understood to have been under the rule of the kingdom of Militia, and that the Murat river valley between Palu and Keban was a secure frontier for Urartu. The Euphrates could be a boundary for the country only once Sarduri II had crossed it in front of Tumishki. However, the battle between Sarduri II and Tiglat-pileser III in 743 BC in the land of Qumaha/Kummuh destabilised Urartu's western border region for a short time. The Urartian kingdom is likely to have regained control of the region before Rusa son of Argishti, and preserved this border until its collapse.

The Urartian kingdom did not, or could not, establish city-scale settlements, which would include temples, palaces and storage facilities, to the west of the Bingöl mountains in Elazığ, Tunceli and Bingöl regions. Kayalıdere, south of the Bingöl mountains, and Altıntepe, north of the Munzur mountains, are settlements too far away to control the region in question. On the other hand, it is known that Urartu founded large settlements and administrative centres in the Van basin, Ağrı region, Armenia and north-western Iran.

Multi-chambered rock-cut tombs, a distinctly Urartian feature, were identified in only a few provincial centres, such as Palu and Mazgirt-Kaleköy, in the wide area between the Bingöl mountains and the Euphrates. There is now plausible evidence to suggest that the regionally abundant single-chambered rock-cut tombs, previously accepted as an Urartian feature, and associated fortresses, could be post-Urartian.[68] Similarly, stepped tunnels, very common across the whole of Anatolia and Uraru,[69] are understood to be post-Urartian, having arrived as part of Hellenistic-Roman traditions.[70]

Centres such as Palu, Bahçecik, Bağın (inscriptions), Mazgirt-Kaleköy and Burmageçit, which safely date to the Urartian period in the West, are all north of the Murat while noting the Habibuşağı campaign inscription found in the Elazığ plain. The fertile Elazığ plain to the south, on the other hand, appears largely barren of development. Norşuntepe, dating to the 7th century BC, is the only excavated settlement in the Elazığ plain with finds that can be closely

[68] Köroğlu 2007.
[69] van Gall 1967.
[70] Köroğlu and Danışmaz 2018.

associated with known Urartian centres. The region's proximity to the Assyrian provincial centres of Amedi and Tushhan, and the consequent safety factor, may have deterred the Urartians.

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ERZİNCAN/ALTINTEPE

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Abstract

The first archaeological excavations at the site of Altıntepe near Erzincan were carried out by Tahsin Özgüç between 1959 and 1968. Architectural remains of a fortress, temple and tombs of the Urartian period together with associated small finds made an important contribution to the understanding of the Urartian civilisation. A fortification wall dating to the Late Roman period encircled the top of the hill. Several building periods were identified, which included two, internal and external lines of walls belonging to the Urartian fortress, together with the gates of the citadel, as well as a palatial building that included a temple. Among other architectural structures are a ceremonial hall with three rows of columns described as an apadana, a storehouse located immediately outside the inner walls of the citadel and an open-air sanctuary located on the terrace of the southern slope of the hill together with three underground chamber tombs built of stone blocks. The new phase of excavations that started in 2003 was aimed to clarify the chronology of some of the architectural structures found within the fortress. Moreover, remaining unprotected since the first excavations, the fortress suffered depredation by looters and natural erosion. Significant results have been obtained in the course of this second phase of excavations that are followed by conservation works.

On the flat bottom of the fertile Erzincan plain, surrounded by mountain chains of north-eastern Turkey, rises a 60 m-high un-erupted volcanic cone called Altıntepe ('the Golden Hill') by the modern local inhabitants (Fig. 1). Located 16 km from the centre of the city of Erzincan, this mound was occupied by a multicomponent archaeological site, a major part of which was excavated by Tahsin Özgüç between 1959 and 1968. These excavations uncovered important architectural complexes and assemblages of archaeological artefacts belonging to the Urartian period. Their results have been widely published[1] and analysed, making a significant contribution to the studies of the Urartian civilisation. Some of the discoveries, such as the Columned Hall ('Apadana', a term borrowed from the archaeology of Achaemenid Iran), the sanctuary with tombs of the elites, and ivories, still remain unique within the context of that civilisation.

[1] Özgüç 1966; 1969.

Fig. 1. General view of Altıntepe from the north-east.

Özgüç's excavations were carried out on the flattish, circular top (200 m in diameter) of the hill, where fortification walls of the Late Roman period were uncovered, together with the two, internal and external walls of the Urartian citadel, a citadel gate, the palatial complex with a temple, ceremonial hall (Apadana), and a storehouse attached from the outside to the inner fortification walls, an open-air sanctuary located on the terrace of the southern slope of the hill, and three underground chamber tombs built of well-dressed stones.

New excavations directed by the author of the present chapter have been conducted since 2003 in order to settle the debates concerning the chronology of some of the architectural remains and to carry out conservation works that would prevent further looting of the unprotected fortress by treasure hunters.

The Bronze and Early Iron Ages

The earliest settlement was established on the hill during the Early Bronze Age, which is attested by samples of pottery found in disturbed contexts during the first and second phases of excavations. Only very limited information is provided in Özgüç's publications with regard to these finds.[2] Yet, during the

[2] Özgüç 1961, 267.

second phase of excavations, black burnished ceramics with incised decorations of the 'Karaz' or Kura-Araxes style of the 3rd millennium BC were found in the burnt layer uncovered within the test-pit inside the Apadana amid stones from unidentifiable architectural remains.[3] We also discovered Middle Bronze Age finds at some places in the citadel.[4]

Representing later periods of occupation, handmade and wheel-made pottery of the Early Iron Age was also found.[5] Samples of brown and grey, together with black and red wares generally characteristic of the period are present. Some examples of monochrome pottery show differences in colour and tone of the external and internal surfaces, which was due to an unstable process of firing. Different types of decorations were used: groove, notch, incised lines and impressed dots.

The absence of identifiable remains of architecture representing these two periods could be attributed to the destruction of the bottom layers of the site, during the clearly visible artificial flattening of the top of the hill from south to north in the course of the Urartian period.[6]

Architectural remains of the Urartian period

Özgüç identified two architectural layers of the Urartian period at Altıntepe, attributing those to the 8th and 7th centuries BC respectively.

The Temple Complex

The temple is one of the most important and the best preserved architectural complexes excavated at Altıntepe. Constructed during the founding of the Urartian fortress it consisted of a central, monumental rectangular building belonging to the well-known Urartian type of *susi* temple-towers enclosed within a peristyle courtyard measuring 27.20 × 30.00 m with three rooms attached on the south-western side. (Fig. 2). The external measurements of the temple-tower are 13.80 × 13.80 m with four corner-pilasters protruding from the walls by 0.5 m and framing its corners from the outside. Its walls had a socle built of well-dressed stone masonry elevated to the height of three courses, on top of which the mud-brick wall was raised. The full height of the temple-tower could have reached 14 m (Fig. 3). A unique element of this

[3] Korucu 2012, 86.
[4] Yılmaz 2020.
[5] Korucu 2012, 86.
[6] Özgüç 1961, 267; 1966, 9.

Fig. 2. Temple of Haldi, Altıntepe.

Fig. 3. Temple of Haldi, Altıntepe. Reconstruction (drawing by S. Kuşu).

building takes the form of the four 0.8 cm-thick bronze discs, measuring 8 cm in diameter, nested in circular hollows 1 cm deep and 8.5 cm in diameter, carved on cornerstones laid in each of the pilasters shaping the corners of the temple-tower.[7] It is possible that the discs could have been related to a foundation ritual, during which measurements were taken from them. The entrance to the interior (i.e. the cella) of the temple-tower opened right in the middle of its south-eastern wall. Two cubic stone bases, drilled from the top and designed to hold spear shafts, were installed on both sides of the two steps leading up from the courtyard into the cella. The entrance to the cella was designed as a portal with recess framing a single-leaf door hinged behind the step-stone of the threshold. The cella had a square layout measuring 5.20 × 5.20 m.[8] Its floor consisted of a layer of hard-packed clay. A podium was constructed beneath the rear wall facing the doorway.[9] The plastered mud-brick walls of the cella were covered with colourful murals.[10] The presence of a drainage system that started from underneath the southern corner of the temple-tower may indicate that an altar for ritual libations could stand inside the cella within approximately a metre from that corner.[11]

The temple-tower was enclosed in a square peristyle courtyard with its gallery shaped by 20 wooden columns, each 4.5 m tall, raised on typically Urartian stone column bases of cylindrical shape. The cylindrical parts were meticulously dressed, whereas the bottom of the bases remained rough, usually hidden under the surface of the floor. The rough parts of the bases installed in the wider, front part of the peristyle remained hidden under the surface of the courtyard, whereas those closer to the rear remained elevated above the ground and were hidden from the spectators by vertically installed slabs. The pebble-paved floor of the peristyle's gallery flattened the surface of the yard mitigating the natural, south-to-north slope of the hill. Like the temple-tower, the external wall of the peristyle courtyard was built of mud bricks erected on top of a stone socle approximately 2 m thick. The south-eastern external wall of the peristyle courtyard had shaped the main façade of the temple complex. It was decorated from the outside with five pilasters protruding from the surface of the wall by 0.45 m (Fig. 4). The row of three rooms aligned on the south-western side of the peristyle courtyard could be entered from the gallery of the courtyard through the

[7] Karaosmanoğlu 2010, 211.
[8] Karaosmanoğlu 2010, 212.
[9] Özgüç 1966, 4. Özgüç interprets it as a pedestal for a sculpture.
[10] Özgüç 1966, 33.
[11] Karaosmanoğlu 2011, 368; Karaosmanoğlu and Yılmaz 2012, 354; Yılmaz 2012, 234 (libation altars connected to a small channel were uncovered in the temple yards of Ayanis and Toprakkale).

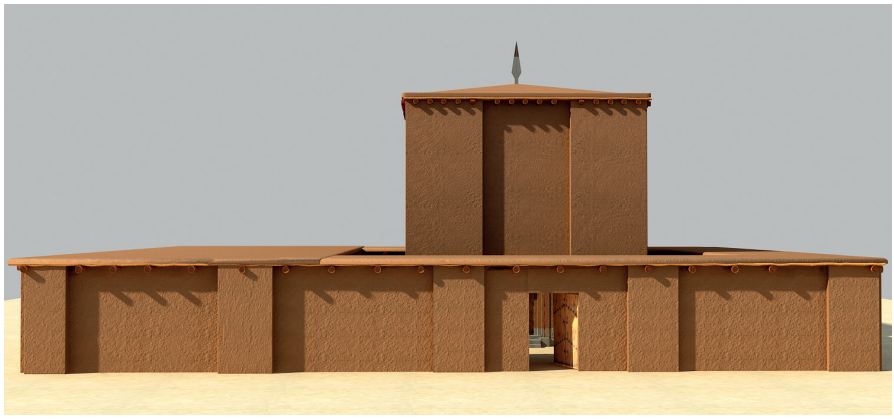

Fig. 4. Reconstruction that shows five *avant-corps* on the courtyard wall (drawing by S. Kuşu).

door of the central, larger elongated room (T2). Entrances to the smaller rooms (T1 and T3) were opened in the two opposite, shorter walls of the large room. All three rooms were used for religious purposes.[12] The walls of these rooms were decorated with colourful murals.[13] The temple complex was damaged in a great earthquake during the Urartian period when the south-eastern and north-eastern sections of the peristyle gallery collapsed. At some point of time following that event, the reconstruction of the whole fortress was undertaken, during which the longitudinal wall of the Columned Hall, i.e. of the Apadana was rebuilt enlarging the width of that hall, and a newly built storehouse was placed in part on the collapsed north-eastern wall of the peristyle courtyard.

The Yard of Irregular Plan and Other Sections of the Palace

The western part of the citadel was occupied by a palatial structure, which was separated from the temple by a yard of irregular plan. Six rooms belonging to that structure were excavated together with the yard. One could walk from the gates of the citadel to that yard passing in front of the façade of the temple complex. Amid the palatial structure a bathroom with a 'stone bath basin'[14]

[12] At least one of the rooms, which according to Özgüç were used for 'cult ceremonies', could have been a storage room for temple paraphernalia, similarly to the one excavated at Ayanis.

[13] Özgüç 1966, 33.

[14] The stone bath basin was found in the room S7 during the first period of excavation. It was most probably removed from there (Özgüç 1966, lev. XV.1, 2).

Fig. 5. Sewerage system of Altıntepe in irregular planned courtyard.

was excavated together with a toilet of *alaturca* (so-called 'Turkish toilet') style (Fig. 5).[15] Rooms S1, S2, S3, S4, S5, S6 composed the living quarters of the governor of Altıntepe. A long wall connected room S3 to the kitchen built next to the Columned Hall and a doorway was opened in that wall to allow for circulation inside the citadel. The excavations of the palatial rooms uncovered a toilet bowl/lavatory sink located inside a niche constructed in the back wall of the room S1. A wooden post standing on a stone base supported the roof of the room S2, which was the largest of the six.

The destruction of the fortress during the major earthquake led to severe damage of the rooms surrounding the western and northern parts of the Early Columned Hall and the 'Expanded Apadana' was built in their place (Fig. 6). During the same period new rooms (S7 and S8) were attached to the southern side of room S3 of the residential complex. A new wall was built connecting the newly expanded Apadana and the second from the west pilaster of the façade of the temple complex. A new door opening from the room T2 of the temple complex provided a passage to the irregular yard.

[15] Karaosmanoğlu and Yılmaz 2012, 357.

Fig. 6. General plan of Altıntepe.

The Pool

It is located between the western side of the rooms S2 and S3 and the interior of the fortification wall.[16] The bottom of the pool, measuring 13.50 × 5.50 m and slanting down toward the centre, was plastered with a 70 cm-thick layer of clay. The side walls, also slanting down, were covered with fist-size pebble-stones of different colours laid mosaic-like into a layer of mortar mix in order to prevent the efflux of water (Fig. 7).[17]

The Western Gate

A gate was built on the western side of the fortification wall, next to the western side of the pool and above the slope of the mound. Below, a fresh water source sprang from the cracks in the rock that formed the mound.

[16] It has been interpreted as a paved yard in publications from the first period of excavation (see Özgüç 1969, 5).

[17] Karaosmanoğlu 2011, 368; 2012, 122–24. (This tradition was kept alive in the region until today. In salt pools near Kemah, the floors of the pools where water is collected were built in the same style.)

Fig. 7. Pool paved with pebbles.

Thus, it is pretty obvious that the gate was built to carry water from the spring to the pool. Steps led inside the fortress through that gate. Both sides of the gate were protected by towers, which gave the gate a depth of 2 m. On both sides of the gates the socles of the walls were built of well-dressed stones (Fig. 8).

The Hypogeum and the Storage Building of the Late Urartian Period

A hypogeum with walls constructed of hewed stones was built under the ground outside the courtyard of the temple complex.[18] It measures 9 × 13 m and is 2.5 m deep. The floor of this structure was paved with hewed flagstones, while its sidewalls, in some places, were preserved up to the height of four courses of meticulously laid stones (Fig. 9). The function of this hypogeum remains uncertain, since no artefacts were found inside, but, whatever it had been, it lost it after the major earthquake that caused the destruction of the fortification walls and of many other structures. The socles of the fortress

[18] Karaosmanoğlu *et al*. 2012, 304.

Fig. 8. Western Gate.

Fig. 9. Hypogeum paved with flat stones.

walls were rebuilt with random masonry of huge rubble stones. But the inside of the hypogeum was filled with clay and dirt, after which this area was turned into a large storeroom 27 × 16.50 m in size where pithoi were set into the ground and aligned shoulder to shoulder (Fig. 10). The pithoi vary in size: the largest has a diameter of 64 cm at both shoulders and mouth, whereas the height varies around 2 m. They have an egg-shaped body with small flat bottoms, wide mouths with everted rims, and reddish and burnished surface. Horizontal belts shaped in appliqué technique decorated the bodies of the pithoi. The widths of the belts varied according to their positions: between 6.6 and 8.4 cm when applied to the midsection of the pot and between 3.4 and 5.6 cm at shoulder level. Triangular bands are located right below the shoulder; their width varies between 6.3 and 7 cm. The thickness of the belts, applied to the body before the pithos dried, varied between 0.5 and 1.2 cm.

Some of the pithoi excavated in the storeroom bear hieroglyphs scratched or debossed on the upper part of the body. In most of the cases those were markings of the volume of the vessel (Fig. 11). As a result of a huge fire that occurred during the invasion of the fortress in the Urartian period, burn layers appeared in the inner walls of pithoi.

Fig. 10. Storage building at east of the temple complex.

Fig. 11. Hieroglyphs with scraped scratches and embossed crescent-shaped decorations on pithoi.

The Drainage System

A sewerage/drainage system of the fortress seems to have been planned from the outerset. It was constructed under the buildings with outflow of the waste water directed toward the east and the west. The system started a metre away from the southern corner of the temple carrying out rain water and fluids remaining from the sacrificial rituals, continued under the rooms on the western side of the citadel and opened outside the inner fortification walls.[19] A lavatory sink/toilet bowl placed in a niche built in the back wall of room S1 drained outside the wall through a small underground channel. The channel went southward underneath the irregular courtyard, first as a row of long, U-shape carved andesite blocks,[20] and continued as a stone-laid conduit.[21] This channel was connected to another one that was laid underground from the temple, to which the conduit from the toilet located on the outer side of the eastern wall of room S1 (the so-called *alaturca* toilet, Fig. 12) was attached. A 'lavatory sink' was found at that spot, installed over the channel

[19] Karaosmanoğlu and Yılmaz 2012, 354.
[20] Özgüç 1966, 9, fig. 13 a, b.
[21] Karaosmanoğlu *et al*. 2009, 121.

Fig. 12. Squat toilet.

and draining into it; similar examples are still in use in Erzincan. A small drain going from the kitchen attached to the northern side of the Columned Hall of the first period was connected to this channel, which then passed under the room S2 and by the pool next to it, at the end pouring its waste water out of the fortification wall. Another channel started from the centre of the inner yard in front of the entrance to the inner fortress and ran toward east passing underneath the gates.

The Early Columned Hall ('First Apadana') and Its Kitchen

The Early Columned Hall (also known as the 'First Apadana') of the Urartian period was built to the south-east of the temple complex, leaving an approximately 6 m-wide yard between the two. Its walls were laid on a flattened rock outcrop that was approximately 2 m higher than the surrounding bedrock, on top of which other buildings were constructed (Fig. 13). Measuring 15 × 37 m, this hall was divided into three longitudinal parts by two rows of wooden

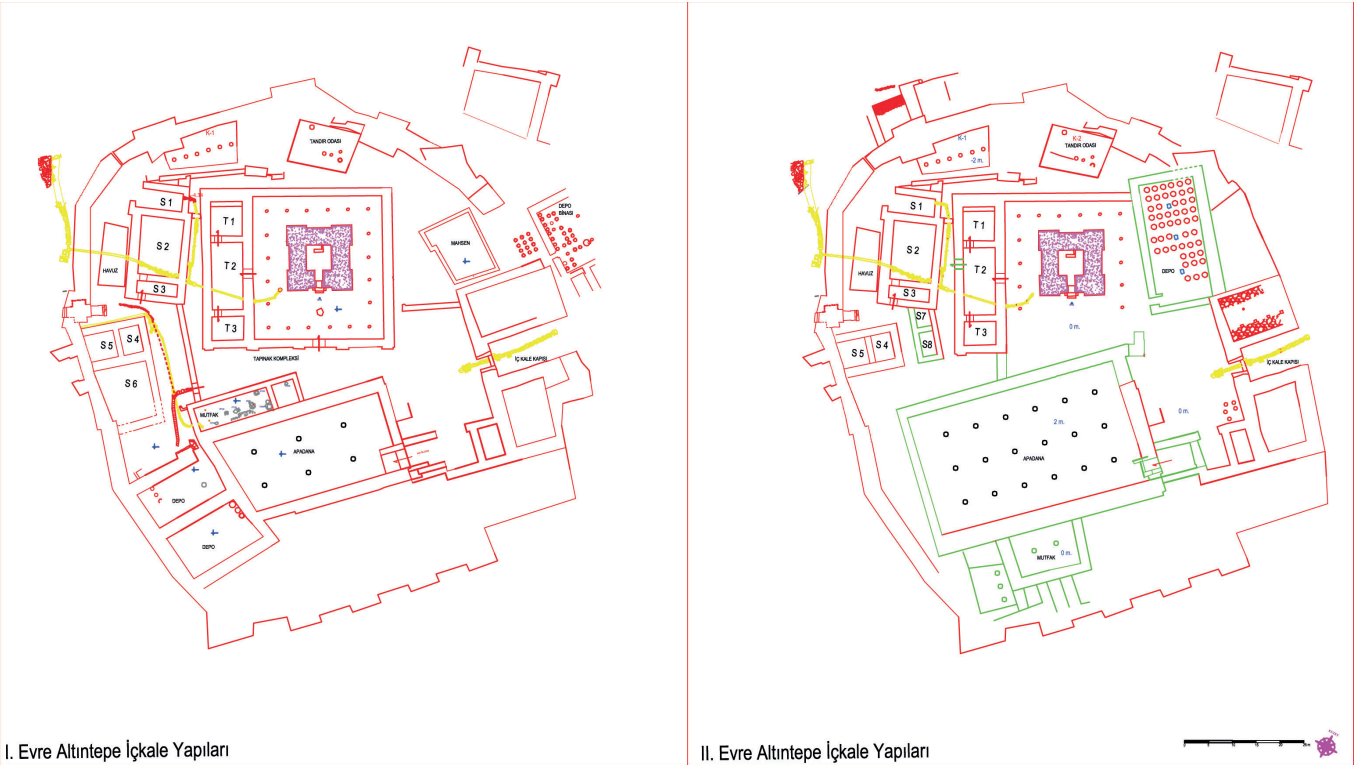

Fig. 13. Plan of citadel belonging to first phase and second phase.

columns standing on cylindrical stone bases (three columns in each row) and supporting the roof.[22] The socle of the walls is built of hewed stones, on top of which mud-brick walls were elevated. The entrance of the hall was located in its eastern corner. Since the floor of the hall was higher by 2 m than the outside area in front of the door, a wooden staircase was built in order to access the hall from the outside.

A kitchen of elongated rectangular plan was attached from the outside to the north-western wall of the hall. Built at a lower level, it had inside a hearth on the floor and an oven, together with four pithoi placed under the walls. The roof of its main room was supported on the south-western end by two 15 cm-thick wooden posts, from which a churn could hang.[23] The bottom ends of these posts were affixed to the floor paved with mud bricks (Fig. 14). The kitchen had a drain that was a part of the sewerage system of the fortress, which was built underground with stone masonry and connected to the main drainage channel coming from the temple and ended on the outside of the inner fortification wall. Two other rooms were excavated to the south of the kitchen and the south-west of the Columned Hall. A stone base for a post was found in the first and the second was identified as a storeroom in which pithoi similar to those of the First Urartian Period were uncovered.

The Expanded Apadana

The Early Columned Hall collapsed in the major earthquake together with the south-eastern and north-eastern colonnades of the peristyle courtyard and its walls. The kitchen attached to the Columned Hall perished in a fire caused by that earthquake. The rebuilding of the citadel happened soon after. The rebuilt Columned Hall became the largest apadana of the Urartian period known thus far in Anatolia. The hall was enlarged toward the north-west by 6 m and partly built over the collapsed part of the peristyle of the temple. In order to make that possible, a 2 m-high platform was added to the outcrop of the natural rock on which previously stood the Columned Hall.[24] This new 44.00 × 25.30 m monumental rectangular structure had 18 wooden columns aligned in three rows of six columns in each that were erected on cylindrical stone bases (each

[22] Five of those column bases were removed from their initial places during the first period of excavations and placed in the corner of the inner yard (Özgüç 1966, 11, lev. XX.1). *Cf.* Karaosmanoğlu and Korucu 2012, 133.

[23] Similar churns, strung out in the same style on a tight rope between two pillars, are still used today in many Anatolian villages. And a similar drawing shows such a churn from Sarissa/Kuşaklı (Powroznik 2010, 182, Abb. 119).

[24] Karaosmanoğlu and Korucu 2012, 134.

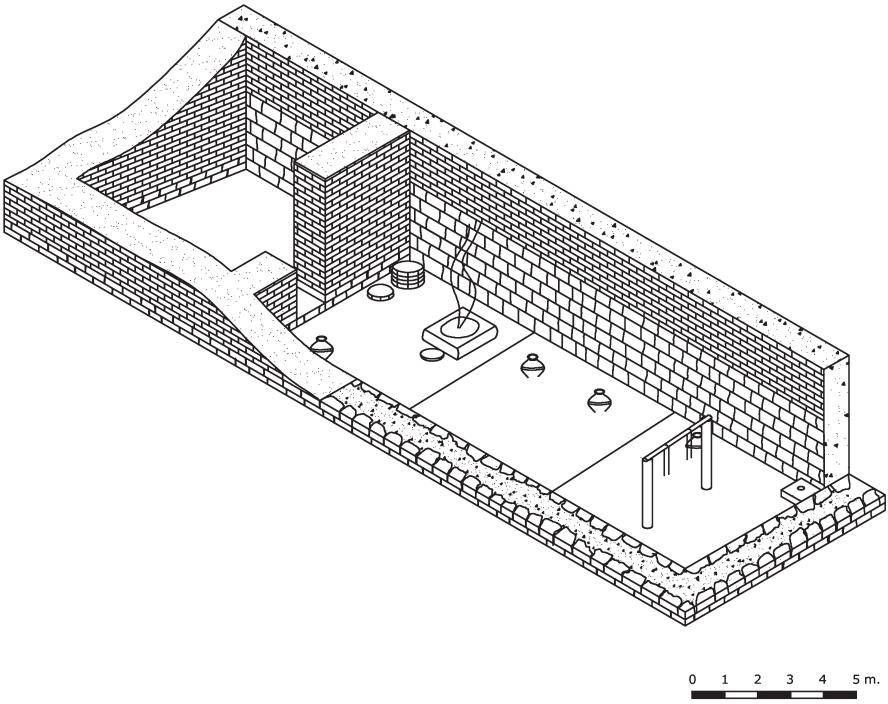

Fig. 14. Reconstruction of the kitchen (drawing by M.A. Yılmaz).

110–120 cm in diameter) carrying a flat roof, the remains of which were removed during the excavations of Özgüç. (Fig. 15). The socle of the Apadana was built of four courses of random rubble masonry, above which the wall of mud-brick masonry was elevated. The entrance of the Expanded Apadana was restored in the same north-eastern corner, however its construction narrowed the remnants of the entrance to the earlier Columned Hall. Two antechambers were built in front of the Apadana, through which a wooden staircase was connecting the ceremonial hall with the yard located between the Apadana and the north-eastern gates of the inner fortification wall. These antechambers and the interior of the Apadana were decorated with colourful murals painted, according to Özgüç, in *fresco-secco*[25] technique. A kitchen of an irregular plan was built next to the south-eastern wall of the ceremonial hall, but at a lower level. Two wooden posts raised on cylindrical stone bases carried its roof. The Expanded Apadana perished in a conflagration.

[25] Özgüç 1966, 14.

Fig. 15. General view of the Apadana.

K1 and K2 Structures

Two structures, numbered K1 and K2 were excavated by Özgüç to the northwest from the temple complex, next to the inner fortification wall.[26] In comparison to the temple complex, both buildings were located at a lower elevation. The roof of K1 was supported by a single row of six wooden columns standing on cylindrical stone bases. The function of this structure remains unidentified, since it yielded no finds. K2 was labelled the 'Tandoor Room' because of the five tandoors (bread-baking underground ovens) uncovered there in different locations.

The Storage Building

A storage building consisting of two rooms was uncovered during the first period of excavations to the north of the inner fortification walls.[27] The northern room is 15.80 × 10 m in size and belonged to the first phase of the Urartian

[26] The finds and other data pertaining to those structures were not published, although both were uncovered in the first period of excavation.

[27] Özgüç 1969, 34–36.

period. Four bases of wooden columns that supported the roof of this building were excavated. The plastered walls built of mud-brick were constructed on a socle of stone masonry. Sixty pithoi, arranged in six rows, ten in each, were buried in the floor up to their shoulders. Their rims are thick and everted, necks cylindrical, bodies egg-shaped, and the small bottoms flat. Thick clay belts were applied to the shoulders and to the widest part of the bodies in order to strengthen the walls of the pithoi. All of the pithoi are red-slipped, thick-walled and burnished. Some bore incised or debossed hieroglyphic marks.

Only 11 pithoi could be excavated in the second room, since it was buried under the fortification walls of the Late Urartian and mediaeval periods, and the measurements of the room were impossible to determine.

The Open-Air Sanctuary and Related Tombs

The sanctuary containing the tombs of the ruling elite of Altıntepe was located on the south-eastern slope of the mound. Composed of two parts, the open-air sanctuary and the underground tombs, this complex was built on a terrace at the elevation of approximately 40 m above the level of the plain. A mud-brick wall built on a stone socle surrounded the 11.70 m-long and 7.75 m-wide enclosure of the sanctuary.[28] Here, four monolithic steles, 2.30 m high and 0.50 m wide, with semi-circular tops installed on pedestals formed a row, in front of which an altar in the shape of a circular basin (0.50 m in diameter) with a sink in its centre was placed. It is hypothesised that a tree of life could stand there and libations related to the cult of the dead performed, since the sanctuary was built in connection with the tombs.[29]

During the Urartian period of occupation the governors of Altıntepe were buried in underground chamber tombs built of fine-dressed cuboid blocks, next to the open-air sanctuary, beneath the terrace. Two of those tombs were accidentally found and robbed by locals, while the third remained intact and was excavated by Özgüç.[30] These tombs are distinguished among best known examples of Urartian funerary structures by their elaborate architectural designs, the quality of stone masonry, preservation of remains pertaining to the funeral ceremony, and exquisite grave offerings. The corpses of the deceased dressed in golden-buttoned attire, were laid to rest inside stone or wooden

[28] Özgüç 1969, 28–30. (The sanctuary was excavated during the first period of excavation. Unfortunately, it was damaged by treasure hunters after the excavations. Today, only one broken stele is preserved on location, but even its pedestal is broken.)

[29] Çevik 1999, 346.

[30] Özgüç 1969, 10–12.

sarcophagi. Bronze cauldrons, a golden bowl and other bronze vessels, silver and bronze decorative details of furniture, a tripod chandelier adorned with figurines and plaques carved of ivory, and metal parts of horse harnesses were found in the tomb. These are exhibited today at the Museum of Anatolian Civilizations in Ankara.

The System of Defences

The fortress of Altıntepe, occupied a strategically important location on the fertile Erzincan plain on the East–West road that later connected Erzurum to Sivas. Built on the top of the mound dominating the surrounding plain it was protected by two circles of fortification walls. The external fortification wall was built of enormous blocks of cyclopean masonry.[31] The inner wall surrounded the structures on the flattened top of the hill and was strengthened with buttresses. The main gate was uncovered on the eastern side of the inner fortification wall. The socles of fortification walls were built of dressed stones on the western side, while the masonry of those on the east is reminiscent of constructions built after the major earthquake, i.e. built of rubble stones.

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[31] Özgüç 1969, 3.

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FORTRESS OF AYANIS (1989–2013)

Altan Çilingiroğlu (†) and Atilla Batmaz

Abstract

The fortress of Ayanis, an Urartian site founded by Rusa son of Argishti (Rusa II), is located some 38 km north of the modern city of Van. The extensive excavations at the site uncovered Urartian remains only from the time of king Rusa II. Ayanis must have been the last fortress built by him who, according to written sources and archaeological evidence, ordered five fortresses to be built during his reign between 685–653 BC. The fortresses that were built during his reign are Karmir-Blur (*Teishebaini*-URU), Bastam (*Rusai*-URU-TUR), Kef Kalesi (*Haldiei* URU ^{KUR}*Ziuquni*), Toprakkale (*Rusahinili Qilbani-kai*) and Ayanis (*Rusahinili Eiduru-kai*).

Location of the Fortress

The fortress is located some 500 m north of the present-day village of Ağartı (previously known as Ayanis) on the eastern bank of Lake Van, across from volcanic Mt Süphan (4058 m) on the other side of the lake. It is on a road that follows the northern side of Lake Van and leads to the Urartian capital of Tushpa (modern Van) (Fig. 1). It is situated 1866 m above sea level and 225 m above the lake level, only 700 m from the lake. The fortress itself is built on a natural rocky hill measuring 400 × 150 m, and is surrounded by heavy fortifications.[1]

Outside the fortress, the settlement area reached up to 80 ha (as indicated by the distribution of Urartian pottery).[2] The fresh water needs of the fortress and its outer town were sustained from a close spring to the north-east of the fortress (Fig. 2) and an artificial lake discovered at 2006 m above sea level.

The site has been investigated via extensive excavations from 1989 to 2013 by a team from Ege University, Izmir, directed by Altan Çilingiroğlu. After Çilingiroğlu's retirement, Mehmet Işıklı from Erzurum University took over the excavations.

[1] Çilingiroğlu 2001a, 9.
[2] Stone and Zimansky 2004, 236.

Fig. 1. Localisation of Ayanis Fortress.

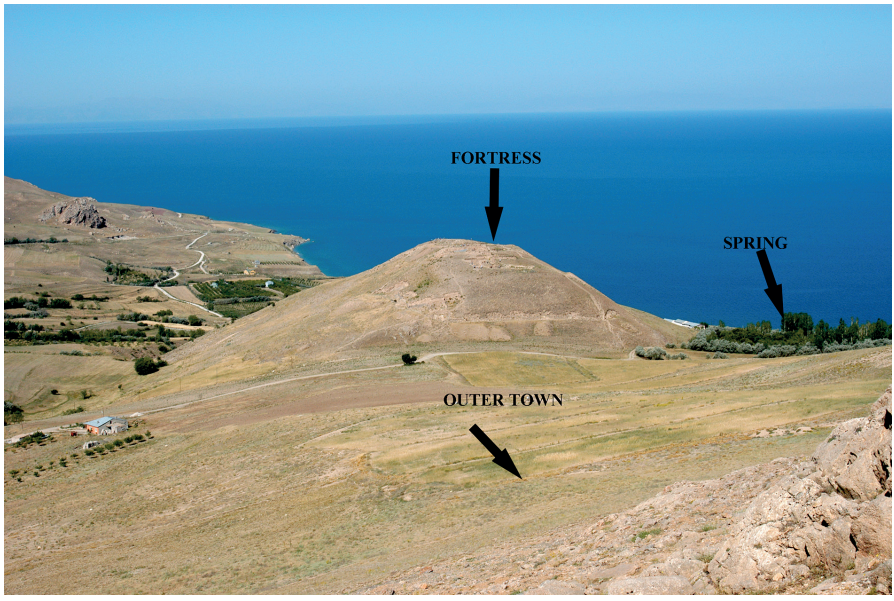

Fig. 2. General view of the fortress and surroundings.

The Name of the Fortress

During the 1993 excavation season, a foundation inscription was discovered in front of the monumental gate in the south-east of the fortress. This inscription contained the name of this fortress which is identified as 'Rusahinili Eiduru-kai' (Rusa's city in front of Mt Eiduru).[3] The same name appears on the 16 m-long temple inscription on the fortress. It is suggested that Mt Eiduru should be identified as Mt Süphan.[4] The temple inscription of Ayanis not only shows that Eiduru gave the fortress its name, but also that Eiduru was a god to whom sacrifices were made and Mt Eiduru is not mentioned as a god in the Urartian pantheon before Rusa II. The foundation inscription discovered in front of the monumental gate contains the following information:

> Through the greatness of Haldi, Rusa, the son of Argishti, has built this fortress to perfection in front of the mountain Eiduru. Rusa says: the rock was <untouched>, nothing was built here (before). I built a shrine (É.BÁRA) as well as a fortress (É.GAL), perfectly. I set new vineyards and orchards and founded a new town (settlement) here. Strong accomplishments, I made here. Through the greatness of Haldi (I am) Rusa, the son of Argishti, mighty king, great king, king of the land of Biainili, lord of the Tushpa-City. Rusa says: whoever my name erases (and) puts his (own) name, may Haldi and the storm god and the sun god annihilate him.[5]

Construction Date of the Fortress

According to archaeological, philological and dendrochronological assessments, Ayanis Fortress must have been constructed immediately after 673/2 BC.[6] This date coincides with the time following the victory against the Assyrians in Shupria. Shupria had been a continuous dispute between the Urartians and Assyrians. We know that the land of Shupria, probably located to the north-west of modern Diyarbakır, was under Urartian sovereignty around 676 BC. The anxious Assyrian king Esarhaddon consulted the god Shamash concerning this pressing issue. It is reported that around 673/2 BC, the Assyrian king had regained control of Shupria. Upon achieving this, he handed his Urartian captives back to Urartu. Relatively peaceful relations, as a consequence of mutual fear from the threatening Cimmerians, persisted between Urartu and Assyria until 656 BC when the Urartian governor of Andaria attacked the land of Shupria.

[3] Salvini 2001, 252, 259.
[4] Çilingiroğlu and Salvini 1995, 120.
[5] Salvini 2001, 252.
[6] Manning *et al*. 2011, 2.

It has been suggested that Karmir-Blur and Toprakkale were built before the Ayanis Fortress, and that Toprakkale and Kef Kalesi were probably built after Ayanis.[7] Therefore, the chronological order of Urartian fortresses built by Rusa II should be: Karmir-Blur, Bastam, Kef, Toprakkale and Ayanis.[8]

Architecture of the Ayanis Fortress

Eastern Fortification

Like all other known Urartian fortresses, Ayanis is surrounded by massive fortification walls. The foundations of the eastern wall were constructed of limestone and, typical of Urartian military architecture, laid directly on bedrock. Bedrock is occasionally carved to form hollows from where the walls are rising. Roughly cut large limestone blocks are placed next to each other and empty space between them filled with smaller limestones. Larger blocks of cut limestone measure around 50–75 cm. Each consecutive course of the wall was set 4–5 cm from the one below. The height of the wall ranges from 1.8 to 2.15 m. Between the limestone foundations and mud-brick superstructure, the Urartians inserted thin and flat sandstone blocks to facilitate strength and the link between the two layers.[9]

The outer surface of the eastern fortification is accompanied by several towers. These, however, show no standardisation in plan or size. They project 2.5–2.7 m from the wall to the outside. The ranging sizes of the towers may imply multiple functions. Possibly, the towers had both defensive purposes and simultaneously supported the buildings in the citadel by forming a terrace. The fortification walls continue towards the west on the south-east corner of the fortress. The excavations conducted on the eastern gate showed that the fortification wall is 4.5 m thick.[10] The walls and corner towers constituting the gate were built using large blocks on the outside and smaller stones on the inside of the wall.

[7] Çilingiroğlu and Salvini 2001b, 23.
[8] Çilingiroğlu 2002, 485.
[9] Çilingiroğlu 2001b, 25.
[10] Çilingiroğlu 2004; 2001b, 26.

Southern Fortification Walls

The southern fortification walls were founded on bedrock which has been carved out to form a flat foundation like the eastern walls were. It has been observed that the fractures inside the bedrock were filled with small stones and a sort of mortar produced from ground limestone.[11]

The southern fortifications enclose the entire southern side and continue towards the west. The walls in this part were built of basalt instead of limestone as observed at the eastern side. Carefully cut and shaped rectangular blocks have been placed vertically on the prepared bedrock (Fig. 3). The size of the basalt blocks varies from 0.8 × 0.6 m to 0.65 × 0.57 m or 0.5 × 0.6 m.[12] These blocks were formed at the quarry, but their final forms were given at the fortress during the construction process as indicated by basalt dust found near the walls. The so-called 'rustic' technique is also observed on the southern fortification walls of Ayanis Fortress. The protruding bumps on the stones are especially eye-catching on the front rows of the wall. This may have been

Fig. 3. Southern basalt fortifications.

[11] Çilingiroğlu 1990, 201.
[12] Çilingiroğlu 2001b, 26.

practised in order to increase the strength of the wall as opposed to being an aesthetic choice.[13] Nevertheless, preference for basalt blocks, their carefully made forms and the ordering of the stone blocks in this way create an inevitable and, perhaps intended, visual pleasure for the observer.

Stone foundations of southern fortification walls do not indicate any particular standard. Foundations can be 2 m in depth in certain parts of the terrain while reaching up to 4 m in some parts.[14] The superstructure made of mudbrick, which is preserved up to 2.70 m, was coated with a thin layer of clay plaster. Overall length of the southern fortification wall so far excavated, which continues towards the west from the monumental gate where the southern and eastern fortification wall converges, is 59.30 m. The closest stone quarry to the fortress is located in Timar village, a distance of 35 km. Therefore, stone material used in the construction of fortification walls may have been obtained from these quarries.[15]

Monumental Gate

Access to the fortress is provided through a monumental gate. This is situated at a place where the tower located in the most easterly part of the southern fortification walls rotates to west. Here bedrock creates a natural elevation. Consequently, the fortress gate was accessible through a ramp. The stone-paved passage of the gate is 2.98 m in width. The monumental gate to the fortress was protected by two basalt flanking towers which are found at the junction of the eastern and southern fortification walls. The tower situated in a westerly direction is 2.13 m wide. However, the one in the easterly direction was damaged. A jamb made of limestone is situated in the middle of the aperture of the gate with a depth of 3 m. The presence of a jamb at this place may indicate a wooden two-winged door. According to the data acquired from Karmir-Blur excavations, such wooden doors were covered up with either bronze or iron plates.[16] The threshold was created by 19 preformed basalt block stones. A sewerage system underneath the threshold and the door frame enables the discharge of drain water coming from the upper sections of the fortress, molten snow, and also the blood of sacrificed animals in the temple.[17] There is

[13] Çilingiroğlu 2004.
[14] Çilingiroğlu 2001b, 27.
[15] Çilingiroğlu 1990, 203; 2004.
[16] Piotrovsky 1950, 43.
[17] Çilingiroğlu 2004.

a similar system uncovered along the gateway of the Bastam Fortress.[18] An inscription (see above) regarding construction, situated in front of the basalt Eastern Tower, measuring 0.44 × 0.59 × 0.18 m, indicates the name of the fortress and its constructor. The gateway described above gives way to a gate chamber. The floor of the room, made of hard-packed clay, was observed to be sloping to the north and south.

The room is thought to be a blind room based on current data, and access to other parts of the fortress from here was closed down. Evidence obtained through excavation indicated that the wall had not been built in the first construction phase of the fortress. It was probably walled after a hazard to which the fortress had been exposed.

An exit, possibly providing communication with the inner structures of the fortress, headed upward from the area of the aforementioned wall. This route may have been closed by walling for security in a modification after a fire that the fortress had experienced (Fig. 4). The other wall forming a corner with the western wall of the gate chamber and traces of plaster uncovered in between prove that this wall was built in a later period. Evidence supporting this is the distinctiveness of the stone foundations on which the wall was

Fig. 4. Blocked access in the gate chamber.

[18] Kleiss 1979, 97.

built. This foundation was trying to link to the stone foundation of the northern floor. That has different characteristics and the disparity reveals, and is revealed by, their different building phases. As a result, access to upper structures of the fortress may have been enabled by turning left from the door chamber towards a 3.30 m-wide path before the first fire.

Temple Area

Situated in the middle section and at the highest point of the fortress, the temple area (30 × 30 m) is surrounded by mud-brick walls. A door with an alabaster threshold located in the north-eastern direction makes the access available to the temple area. Right in front of the door, an inscription on two construction discs, uncovered buried into the ground in the courtyard, indicates that the structure was dedicated to the god Haldi by Rusa son of Argishti. There are 10 pillars in the temple area. Pillars supporting the roof and probably clerestory as well were made out of mud-brick, built on three rows of basalt stone foundation reaching up to 1.5 m.[19] The corner pillars measure 2.60 × 2.70 m, and 2.50 × 2.50 m for other pillars.[20] The distance between the pillars is 6.0 m, and 3.60 m from the side walls. Pillars were built on bedrock with an average of 0.30 m in depth from the floor.[21]

A core temple of square plan is situated in the middle of the area (Fig. 5). Its rear wall leans against the eastern wall of the area. The core temple with projections on the corners measures 12.75 × 12.75 m. There is a portico constructed of wooden materials in front of the pillars which support the roof. The area outside the section which is covered by porticos and pillars is situated in front of the core temple and is open from the top. Within the open section in the middle of the area and right across the temple entrance is a structure of circular plan, 3.50 m in diameter. The exterior of the structure was built of medium-sized limestones; the interior of small-sized limestones. This area situated in the temple courtyard may have been used by the priests during ceremonies.[22] The blue paint on the walls (which are often painted in blue, red, and white) is obtained with the help of the synthetic material called 'Egyptian blue'.[23]

[19] Çilingiroğlu 2012a, 6.
[20] Çilingiroğlu 2001c, 38.
[21] Çilingiroğlu 2001c, 38.
[22] Çilingiroğlu 2011a, 345–46; 2012a, 5.
[23] Ingo *et al*. 2013; Çilingiroğlu 2014.

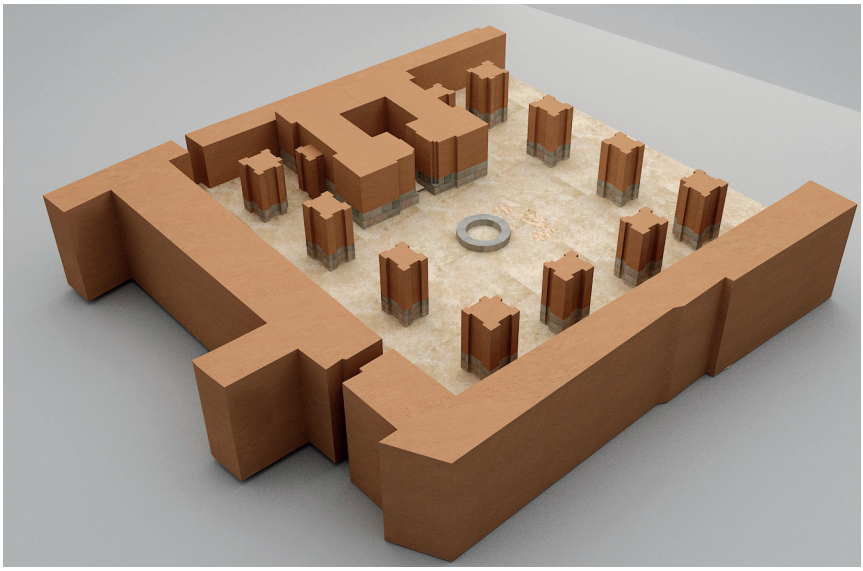

Fig. 5. 3D reconstruction of temple area (drawing by S. Kuşu).

Certain parts of the temple area were constructed on natural bedrock which slopes sharply towards the south. In other words, bedrock elevation towards the southern section of the fortress gets deeper. Urartian architects took advantage of this situation by building various structures in this area where elevation creates a difference. These quadrangular rooms are *ca.* 5–5.5 m lower in elevation than the temple courtyard (– 4.15 m). These rooms, seven in total, have an east–west alignment and are built next to each other in the southern wall of the temple area. Access to them is facilitated by a room to the south-west of the temple area courtyard. The last room to the east is attached to the eastern wall of the temple area and has no access to it from here. The mud-brick walls encircling this building complex must have reached higher than the temple courtyard and reached to the rooftop. To ensure that the courtyard continued towards the south, wooden beams were laid down from the courtyard to the high mud-brick walls which were subsequently covered with mud blocks. A 6 m-thick platform wall that constitutes the northern wall of these rooms was also designed to carry the pillars (nos. 7–10) that stand in the courtyard of the temple area. The rooms described here must have held the votive objects that were presented to the temple. [24]

[24] Batmaz 2015a; 2015b.

Fig. 6. Decorated stone mosaics of cella.

The core temple has a square-like shape with risalites (corner buttresses) on the corners. There are supportive pillars adjacent to the south and north walls in the core temple. Access to the cella is provided by a three-tiered recessed corridor. The cella, measuring 4.58 × 4.62 m, is paved with 90 alabaster plaques. An alabaster podium adjacent to the back (east) wall of the cella is decorated with incised motifs of winged and eagle-headed lions.[25] Stone mosaics decorating the temple walls are still in their places (Fig. 6). The walls of the cella were constructed from two rows of basalt blocks and the superstructure was evidently built of mud-brick. Basalt blocks were decorated with filled engravings, having sacred symbols of gods and floral motifs. The motifs on the right and left-hand sides of the temple wall repeat themselves on the both sides.[26] A number of stones forming the pavement were unstable (noticed during the excavations). Also, the temple walls shifted *ca.* 15 cm. Such damage to the core temple was probably caused by a strong earthquake.

[25] Çilingiroğlu 2001c, 40.
[26] Çilingiroğlu 2011a, 346.

The Urartian inscription seen on the entrance and in the corridor, 16 m in length, is the longest temple inscription in Urartu and the third longest inscription ever discovered at an Urartian site. It states that the temple was built by Rusa son of Argishti, and dedicated to the god Haldi. The design of the fortress and outer town was undertaken by Rusa and the people working on its construction. Those who are reported as contributing to the construction of the fortress were described as brought from 'enemy states' via mass deportations from the lands of Mushki, Etiuni, Targani, Tablani, Hate and Assur.[27] Orchards and gardens were also built outside of the town built for these people, and they were given to the service of the people. The inscription also states the various sacrificial activities and the number of animals to be slaughtered.

The significance of the Ayanis temple area comes from the information it provides on Urartian state religion and rituals. In the temple area, large numbers of bronze shields, quivers, helmets, arrowheads, spearheads, cauldrons, swords and spears were discovered. Many of these objects contained a votive inscription bearing the name of Rusa son of Argishti. One of the two interesting exceptions is a bronze helmet bearing the name of Argishti son of Rusa (Argishti II), also dedicated to the god Haldi. Another is a bronze shield.[28] Various types of objects and finds in the temple area provide insights about the nature of the rituals held in this area. A cleaning tub, a sacred wine pithos, a bronze cauldron, hearths and a libation altar were discovered in the area. [29]

Domestic Quarters

Excavations at Ayanis unearthed domestic areas where daily activities took place.[30] The domestic quarter is situated to the west of the temple area and is in the centre of the fortress. Up to 2013, nine of these rooms had been excavated. Extending to *ca.* 300 m^2, these have rectangular or square plans with common walls and doors (Fig. 7).[31] Some of these rooms have hearths and others storage jars. Jars were used to store vast amounts of barley and millet for daily needs. Grinding implements, baskets, tub-like yeasting vessels for making beer and many vessels in various forms reinforce the image of domesticity. One of the rooms contained benches to sit upon. Non-royal seals found in these areas must have belonged to the staff working in the domestic quarters. Tools such as an iron axes, sickles, knives, picks and shovels found in

[27] Salvini 2001, 253–62.
[28] Batmaz 2015a; 2015b.
[29] Çilingiroğlu 2005.
[30] Çilingiroğlu 2011b.
[31] Çilingiroğlu 2007.

Fig. 7. Domestic buildings.

these rooms are for daily activities. Items such as the swords of people who worked in domestic rooms are among the artefacts discovered.[32] One *akinakes*-type sword, generally associated with horse-riding tribes, is an interesting find.[33]

The most fundamental architectural feature is that the rooms lean on a main wall with a north-west to south-east alignment. It remains unknown whether the rooms have upper storeys. The rooms are built of mud-brick with stone foundations and have hard-packed clay floors. The rooms have walls preserved up to 2.5 m and perhaps had flat roofs. Archaeological observations point out that the rooms were renovated periodically.

[32] Çilingiroğlu 2011a, 352–53.
[33] Çilingiroğlu 2011c.

Ceremonial Corridor

The rooms around a long rectangular corridor that were discovered to the south of domestic quarters and south of the main wall compose a separate space of activity. Various special finds discovered in this corridor (room 10) indicate that this was an area where religious activities in royal level took place.[34] There is direct access to rooms 11 and 12 from the corridor via door-openings. Consequently, access to room 10 would be provided with a 1 m-wide door on the south wall and 0.8 m-wide doors on the west wall. room 10, or the corridor, has an east to west alignment and a long rectangular shape (9.3 × 3.15 m). This area, together with building 11, creates a long corridor. Because of the special character of finds discovered here, this area is named the 'Ceremonial Corridor'.

As mentioned above, the finds from this area are exceptional. The painted plaster fragments found indicate that the corridor walls were painted in blue and brown. In front of the northern and southern walls, 35 gold-foiled bronze rosettes, a gold sun disk and a bronze rosette in the form of a star were found. The gold-foiled and star-shaped bronze which might be a part of the decoration the walls, can also be a decoration of a head-dress (Fig. 8). In the north-west

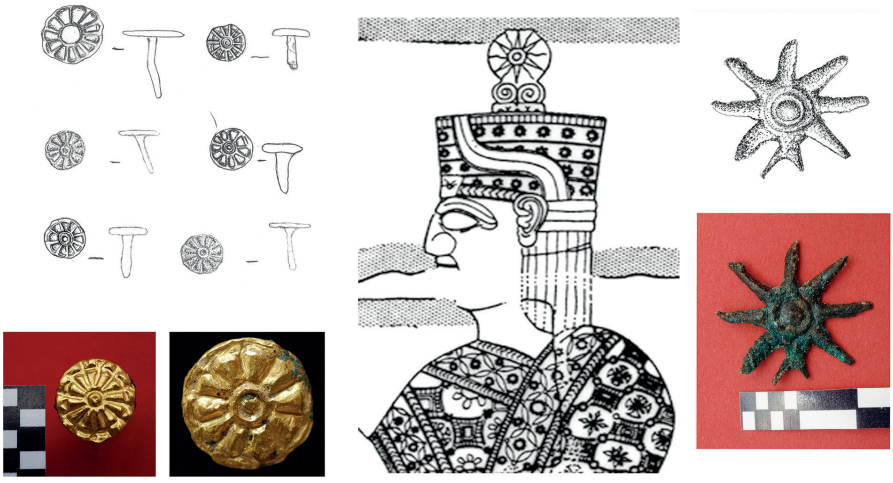

Fig. 8. Decoration elements from the Ceremonial Corridor (with an indication of head-dress of Teisheba).

[34] For the rituals, see Batmaz 2013.

corner, where southern and western walls collide, there is a hollow opened in the floor. In this hollow, a rectangular object made out of chalkstone with a central hole was discovered *in situ*.[35] This architectural piece is *ca*. 40 cm long, 20 cm wide and the central hole is 5 cm in diameter. This chalkstone installation must be the altar where a wooden Tree of Life was inserted. The finds which support our interpretation originate also from this area. Close to the altar and on the floor, excavations recovered almond-shaped interlocking mosaic-type stones. It seems like the number of these mosaics are not enough to cover a wall for decoration. They should be symbolically representing the fruits or buds of the Tree of Life.[36]

There are other extraordinary finds from this area. Among those, a golden fan handle or handle of a standard with an inscription that reads 'This belongs to Queen Qaquli' is worth emphasising.[37] Qaquli was the wife of Rusa II. The mention of a queen in this inscription is also significant because very few female names are mentioned in Urartian inscriptions. Storage rooms which contained hundreds of vessels provided important information about Urartian ceramics (Fig. 9).[38] The room contained dozens of trefoil jugs in the eastern part and mostly buff slipped jars in the western. Red glossy slipped jugs and jars were stacked carefully on a mat covering the bedrock and were also covered with mats. These fine vessels were stored here, perhaps in order to be used during ceremonies that took place in the corridor. [39]

West Magazines

The 'West Magazines', or western storage rooms, were discovered in the early years of excavation and present insightful information about the storage system of the fortress. The storage area is located to the south and north of a thick wall that runs all along the east–west direction of the fortress. The southern section of this east–west wall continues towards the south at a right angle following the slope of the natural bedrock.[40] The storage areas here follow the natural slope of the hill and reach as deep as 25 m from the highest point of the hill.[41] The height of the walls surrounding the storage area changes

[35] Batmaz 2012.
[36] Batmaz 2013.
[37] Çilingiroğlu 2012b, 99–100.
[38] Çilingiroğlu 2011a, 354–55; Çilingiroğlu and Batmaz 2014, 180–83; Erdem 2014, 149–50; Batmaz 2014, 127–31.
[39] Çilingiroğlu 2012a, 11; Batmaz 2013, 79.
[40] Çilingiroğlu 2001d, 67.
[41] Çilingiroğlu 2012a, 17.

Fig. 9. Pottery from rooms 13 and 14.

according to the elevation of the slope and it reaches in steps to the elevation of the northern wall. At this elevation, entrance to the storage area is made possible. It is possible that this building is two-storeyed. The storage area where pithoi were installed must have been a basement of this building. Terracing in this sloping area enabled rooms to be created for large pithoi and jars.[42] In total, ten rooms holding pithoi and other storage containers were discovered. Wooden beams found in between the pithoi made walking in the rooms easier. Because the rooms are situated at different elevations, access to them was provided by mud-brick or wooden stairs and corridors (Fig. 10). Rooms with a south–north alignment usually have rectangular plans and occasional doors with bronze door rings and latches (Fig. 11) to facilitate access. These rooms had mud-brick walls of 1.7–2.9 m thickness with stone foundations resting on the natural bedrock. Such thickness may indicate that an upper floor existed in this area. Niches in the walls and benches in front of them functioned to hold smaller-sized storage jars[43] and various types of vessels including a *yayık* (churn) which was used for producing cream and butter[44] (Fig. 12). It is noteworthy that several bronze vessels in various forms were uncovered beside and between the pithoi (Fig. 13). A small number of oil lamps were found in this area, suggesting that natural light entered the building through windows.

The pithoi inside the storage rooms with 0.78 to 1.5 m rim diameters and 1.5 to 2.5 m heights were placed in rows of three. The mouths of the pithoi were covered with a textile and sealed for protection.[45] Many pithoi had inscribed bullae next to them. It is possible to observe archaeologically that these bullae were tied to the textile that covered the mouths of the pithoi. Storage areas must have been used to store diverse foods and commodities that were sent or brought to the fortress in different ways.[46] In this area, 250 pithoi have been discovered so far. We are not informed about the contents of the pithoi. Although no tangible remains were preserved, we can suggest that wheat, barley, oil and wine were stored in them. The empty pithoi may signal that the fortress was destroyed immediately before the harvesting season. A cistern has not been attested in the fortress during the excavations. However, pithoi in another storage room located in the northern part of the east–west wall and in the Pillared Hall (see below) must have contained only water.[47]

[42] Çilingiroğlu 2011a, 356.
[43] Çilingiroğlu 2001d, 67.
[44] Çilingiroğlu and Batmaz 2014, 177; Batmaz 2014, 124.
[45] Çilingiroğlu 2011a, 356.
[46] Çilingiroğlu 2012a, 17–18.
[47] For detailed information regarding water supply and storage of water for the fortress, see Çilingiroğlu 2019.

Fig. 10. Pithoi unearthed from the western storage rooms (West Magazines).

Fig. 11. Door fittings.

Fig. 12. Churn (*yayık*) uncovered from one of the western storage rooms (West Magazines).

Fig. 13. Bronze vessels found from western storage rooms (West Magazines).

Pillared Hall

Excavations in the east of the fortress showed that in this section a large pillared hall and storage areas in its basement were located. This area was used to store goods belonging to the temple. We suggest that the *ashihusi* building, that is said on a bulla to have been built on the fortress, must be located here.[48]

The mud-brick superstructure of the pillars found in this area was completely destroyed. The pillar bases are rectangular in shape (2.54 × 2.07 m). These pillars have 20 cm-long projections on their corners like those seen in the temple area. Each of these pillars is created by placing three 50 cm-high basalt blocks on top of each other, creating a 1.5 m-high pillar base.

The stones forming the pillar bases were hollow on the inside. These empty spaces were filled with basalt flakes following the working of the stone façades. The distance between the pillars is 3.8 m in a south–north alignment, and 3.08 m in east–west alignment.[49]

Across Pillar 4 there is the southern wall and remains of a door-opening that provides access to this area. In this area, seven pillars, partially destroyed by mediaeval occupation, have been unearthed so far. The plastered walls must have been painted in blue and brown. Some plaster pieces showed blue linear motifs on brown background or blue, reddish-brown and light brown colours together. Excavations revealed *in-situ* remains of a 1.9 m-wide door-opening on the southern wall with wooden beams and stones keeping these beams stable. The bases of the pillars were either placed directly on the natural bedrock or, when this was not a possibility, the Urartian architects built mud-brick platforms to support them. The elevation of the pillar bases constituted the floor horizon of the hall. The floor so formed also functioned as the ceiling of the basement floor.

The storage area to the south of this space housed a ceramic pile reaching up to 1 m high. The deposits, consisting of tens of thousands of sherds crushed under tons of mud-brick and basalt debris, exceeds a depth of 1.0 m in some places. There are many whole vessels among the ceramics, which do not show any use wear. The ceramics here were crushed under the heavy destruction debris of mud bricks and basalt stones.

In front of the southern and eastern walls, four clay tablets and clay balls – to be turned into tablets – were discovered inside small-sized jars. Preliminary examination of these tablets indicates that the tablets contained repetitive syllables as one would expect on a tablet with scribal exercises (Fig. 14).[50]

[48] Çilingiroğlu 2006, 77–79.

[49] Çilingiroğlu 2012a, 12–13; Baştürk 2012, 1–2; Çilingiroğlu and Batmaz 2014, 177–80; Batmaz 2014, 124–25.

[50] *CTU* IV, CT Ay- 2009 1-9.

Fig. 14. A broken school tablet from depots of the Pillared Hall.

Apart from the ceramics and animal bones found in this area during the excavations, some significant metal finds were also discovered, especially in the south-east corner where the eastern wall meets the party wall. These metal artefacts include spear head or sword handle, three candelabra, three pitch-forks, two ploughs and iron implements belonging to the plough (Fig. 15).

Fig. 15. Ploughshares and a basic model of a plough.

Fig. 16. Pithoi excavated in the eastern storage rooms (East Magazines).

The ‘East Magazines’ are located in the basement of the Pillared Hall. Also known as the eastern storage rooms, this space, where pithoi are kept, covers an area of 25 × 40 m. Twenty-three pithoi, with heights reaching 2.15 m and belly diameters 1.5 m, were found in this room. The rim diameters of these storage vessels range from 0.78 to 0.84 cm.[51] These pithoi were buried in the ground up to their bellies (Fig. 16). Although certain pithoi bore decorative elements, none of them was inscribed. Their contents also remains a mystery; their volumes reach up to 1500 kg.[52]

The Destruction of the Fortress: An Earthquake?

The destruction of the Ayanis Fortress was previously associated with invasions or an economic collapse. However, it is also a possibility that the fortress was destroyed after a strong earthquake. When archaeological evidence from Urartian fortresses in the Van region, such as Ayanis, Yukarı Anzaf and Çavuştepe, is taken into consideration, it can be suggested that a heavy

[51] Çilingiroğlu 2012a, 12.
[52] Sağlamtimur 2001, 64.

earthquake hit the region in the 7th century BC.[53] Following this destruction, Ayanis was never re-settled by the Urartians. The sliding of the pillars and traces of a heavy fire in the temple area and magazines is evidence suggesting an earthquake. Inside the cella, basalt blocks shifted in their place by *ca.* 15 cm, altering the axis of the temple plan.[54] The pillars in the Pillared Hall, with monumental basalt blocks measuring 2.5 × 2.5 m, also slid. Complementary evidence has also been detected in the outer town of Ayanis.[55] The destruction following this catastrophic event may have resulted in the weakening of the central authority and control, and halted operation of interregional networks.[56] Nevertheless, recent evidence demonstrates that the kingdom was still powerful during the reign of Rusa II because military and civic undertakings continued during his reign. Archaeological evidence suggests that the cella was looted by people living in the outer town. The corridor leading to the cella, cella floor and temple courtyard were, luckily, covered with the destruction debris of mud-brick walls which prevented the looters reaching these deposits. This final catastrophic event was sad for the Urartian people, but it provides archaeologists with immense opportunities to learn about Urartian history and culture.

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[53] Batmaz 2018a; 2018b.
[54] Çilingiroğlu 2011a, 346.
[55] Çilingiroğlu 2011a, 339.
[56] Çilingiroğlu and Salvini 1999, 56; Çilingiroğlu 2002; Batmaz 2018b.

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BASTAM

Paul ZIMANSKY

Abstract

Bastam, ancient *Rusai*-URU.TUR (Rusa's small city), is the largest and most extensively excavated Urartian site in modern Iran. Founded by Rusa son of Argishti, its citadel stretches along a ridge overlooking the Qara Zia Edin plain with major structures built on the low-lying alluvium beside it. The primary excavations at the site were directed by Wolfram Kleiss of the Deutsches Archäologisches Institut from 1968 to 1978 and have been fully published. Although many bullae and some important tablets were found here, the most noteworthy aspects of the site are its architecture and ceramics.

Bastam, ancient *Rusai*-URU.TUR, is located in north-western Iran at the point where the Aq Çay flows into the Qara Zia Edin plain (38° 53' 8" N by 44° 56' 52" E). Its Urartian structures are built on and beside a spine of rock that rises more than 150 m above the alluvial plain and were laid out by Rusa son of Argishti, for whom a synchronism with Esarhaddon of Assyria in 673 BC is generally recognised.[1] Bastam appears to have been significant component of his extensive building programme, which also included the construction of major citadels at Karmir-Blur, Adilcevaz Kef Kalesi and Ayanis. Despite its diminutive name, 'Rusa's Small City', which presumably reflects its secondary standing to Rusahinili Eiduru-kai (Ayanis), Bastam is one of the largest and most complex sites created by the Urartian regime. A poorly preserved *tepe* near the modern village at the eastern foot of the ridge indicates earlier occupation of the area. Nearby is a tumulus mound built up of debris that seems to include Early Iron Age sherds from this *tepe*, but none from the Urartian era, suggesting it was built in the 8th or 7th centuries BC.[2] Although the Urartian architecture at Bastam was created in a sequence of phases, there is no evidence to doubt the word of Rusa in claiming to be its founder, and there are no indications of building activity there by any subsequent Urartian king.

[1] Whether there were earlier Urartian structures at the site, and if so, how much earlier, remains a moot point. There appear to be some wall footings that do not correspond to the plan of Rusa son of Argishti, but it is by no means certain that these were ever built upon (see Kroll 1988, 75–76; and more recently, Kroll 2011, 163, where the existence of a 9th-century Urartian fortress is given as fact).

[2] Kleiss 1988, 79–80.

History of Excavation

Despite the clear surface visibility of cyclopean walls, wall footings and terraces on the citadel rock, scant notice was taken of Bastam before Wolfram Kleiss visited it in 1967 in the course of his pioneering exploration of Urartian sites in north-west Iran. His attention was drawn to the location by a foundation inscription[3] long removed from its original context. In the early 20th century this had been found built into a bridge in the village of Kasian, 3 km east-north-east of Bastam, and taken to the provincial seat of Maku. In 1965 it was brought to the Teheran Archaeological Museum,[4] where it enough of its history was remembered to encourage Kleiss to explore the Qara Zia Edin area. The text relates that Rusa son of Argishti built a sanctuary (É.BÁRA) for Haldi and named it *Rusai*-URU.TUR. From the outset the proximity of the inscription's 20th-century find-spot to the visible ruins of the citadel made it a working assumption that this name referred to Bastam. Kleiss was able to confirm the identification when pithoi marked with the abbreviation *Ru*-URU.TUR were excavated at the site in 1977. Some of the earliest publications mistakenly rendered the ancient name as *Rusahinili* or translated the Sumerogram in its last segment with the Urartian word *patari* to make it *Rusaipatari*, but these errors disappeared from scholarly publications almost immediately.

Operating from the Deutsches Archäologisches Institut in Teheran, Kleiss began work at the site with a six-day test excavation in 1968. This was followed by annual summer campaigns from 1969 through to 1978[5] during which Kleiss, who was also serving as the Director of the DAI for most of this span, combined direction of the Bastam project with survey work locating and mapping other Urartian sites. Stephan Kroll, who was with the project for the duration, served as his deputy in directing the excavation. The field seasons generally lasted ten or eleven weeks, and were conducted at several places on the site simultaneously by teams of local workmen supervised by students from Germany and elsewhere.[6] It was an appropriately large-scale excavation for a very large site. The political turmoil associated with the Iranian revolution and its aftermath brought the DAI phase of exploration to an end. Working for

[3] *CTU* A 12-7.

[4] Kleiss 1968, 1; 1979, 11.

[5] There were no excavations in the summer of 1971, nor 1976 when Kleiss was one of the hosts of the VIIth International Congress for Iranian Art and Archaeology in Munich.

[6] The author was one of these students and was at the site for the final three seasons. I hasten to add that I had no supervisory responsibility for the excavation as a whole, although Kleiss generously allowed me to submit a chapter on one of the areas in which I worked to the final publication (Kleiss 1988, 107–24).

Iran's Cultural Heritage Organisation (ICHO) Hamid Khatib Shahidi returned to the site with an Iranian team in 1999, but the author is unaware of any publications that have come out of this. On August 9, 2007 Bastam was proposed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. This status has not been confirmed, nor has any other Urartian site been put on the World Heritage list.

Site Plan and Architecture

The Urartian structures at Bastam are found both on the citadel rock and on the surrounding plain, strung out along a topographically defined line that stretches 1 km north to south (Fig. 1).[7] Kleiss divided the citadel itself into three primary zones: an Upper Castle (*Oberburg*), Middle Castle (*Mittelburg*) and Lower Castle (*Unterburg*), each marked off by a buttressed fortification wall. Other areas designated the Northern Outer Castle (*nördliche Vorburg*) and Eastern Outer Castle (*östliche Vorburg*), respectively, were defined on the lower slopes by perimeter walls but remained unexplored. Two gates gave access to the citadel, one in the south, through which a road entered the Lower Castle and ascended to the Middle Castle, and another in the north, from which a pathway ascended to the base of the Middle Castle and joined the road coming from the south (Fig. 2). There was a settlement area on the flat land to the north of the north gate, and an enormous rectangular enclosure known as the *Ostbau* some 500 m east of the Lower Castle. The site towers over the Qara Zia Edin plain, with the uppermost crag of bare rock at the summit of the citadel 163 m above the floor levels of the *Ostbau*, the lowest-lying building excavated. Urartian architecture is found at every level in between.

The recovery of architectural plans was a key objective of the excavations, and in many instances the form of the buildings is virtually all that is known of them. Small finds were comparatively rare, and there were few clues to establish the functions of many structures. We will begin our discussion at the northern end of the site and proceed southward, but caution that elevation was perhaps the most important factor in the site's overall organisation.

At the extreme north, on land beside a now dried stream bed is a large, free-standing building designated the North Building (*Nordgebäude*) (Fig. 3). This stands out from the other buildings in the settlement area because of its size

[7] Published plans and Kleiss's terminology represent the site as running close to north to south, but satellite photographs, oriented to true rather than magnetic north, indicate the direction is actually north–west to south–east. Here we use directional notations as they appear in the publications to streamline the discussion.

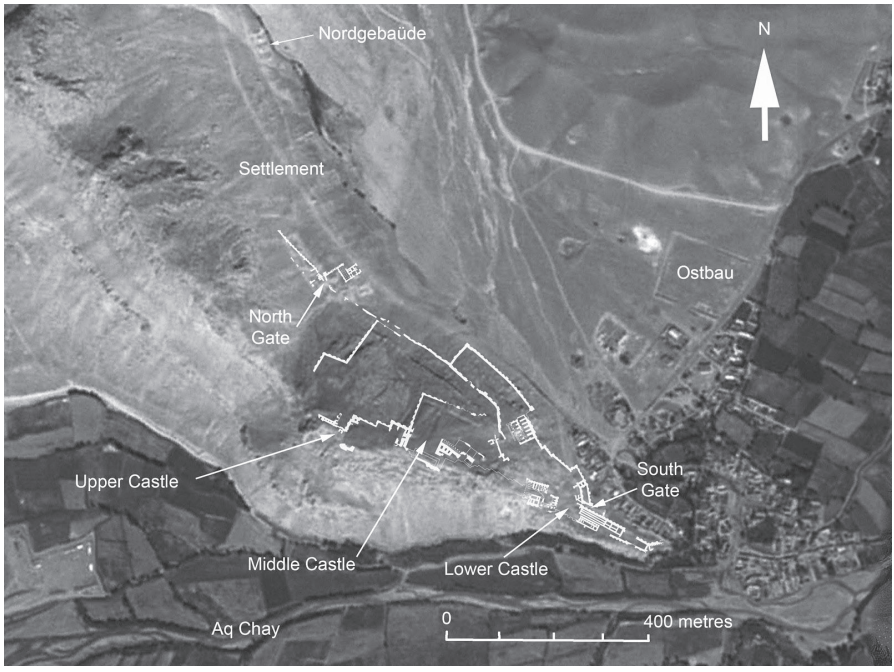

Fig. 1. Site plan imposed on Google Earth Image.
Note north orientation differs somewhat from published plans (*cf*. Fig. 3).

and formally constructed walls, which are buttressed at regular intervals. The wall on its western side is narrower and unlike the walls of the rest of the perimeter, suggesting that the building was meant to be much larger but was never completed. Although there was minimal excavation in the interior spaces, Kleiss dated it to the final phase of the Urartian occupation and suggested that it might have been a smaller palace or summer residence for the lord of Bastam.[8]

On the low ground that stretched between the *Nordgebäude* and the gateway providing access to the ascent road of the citadel was a settlement area in which walls of many structures be clearly seen on the surface (Fig. 4). While many of the visible walls appear to share a common alignment, some groups are angled slightly differently from others. There is certainly no question of a grid, or any other uniform pattern of architectural layout. A central part of this domestic quarter was excavated, revealing what Kleiss describes as a complete

[8] Kleiss 1972, 38.

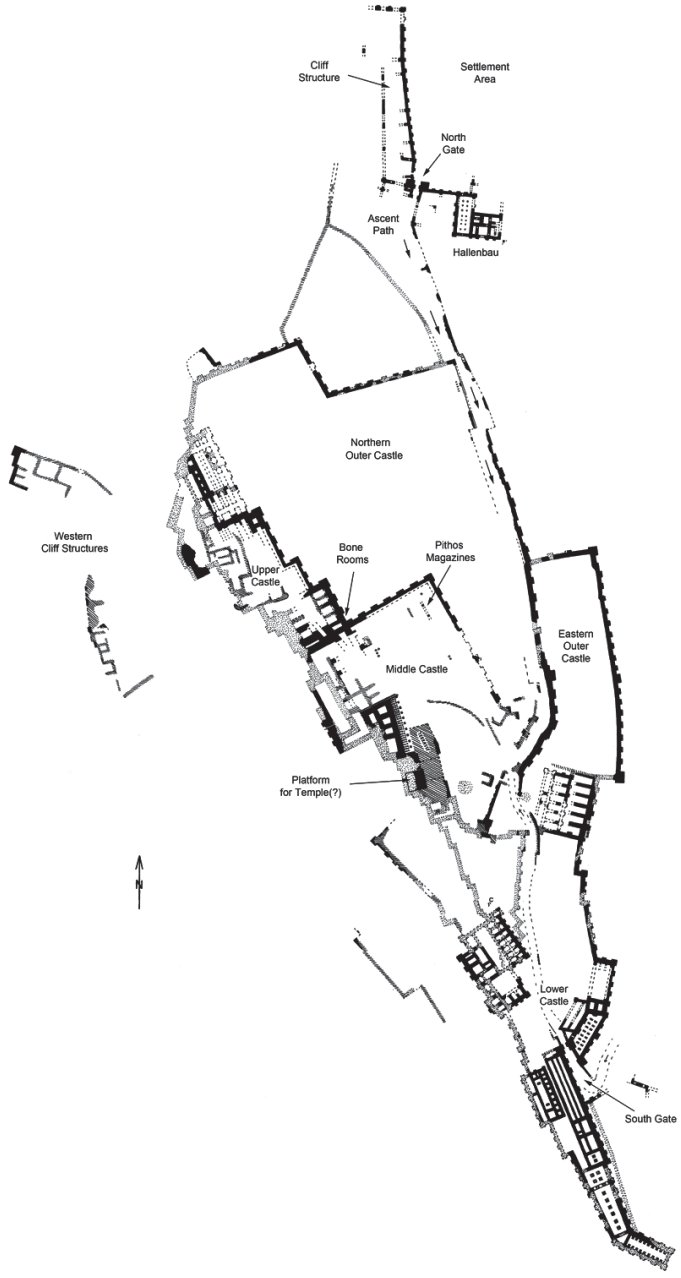

Fig. 2. Bastam citadel structures (modified from plan in Kleiss 1988). *Cf*. Fig. 1 for orientation.

eight-roomed house and a structure that continues it east.[9] The main building included a room with pithoi and paved areas, presumably for stabling animals (Fig. 3). Several phases of agglutinative construction and rebuilding were identified in this domestic complex. Although the whole settlement area extends over more than five hectares, the space is not used intensively. There appear to be open areas between blocks of houses. All in all, this housing area can have accounted for only a small portion of the people who resided at Bastam in the Urartian period.

The southern end of the settlement is separated from the entrance to the citadel by two structures flanking the north gate (Fig. 3). While the settlement was not fortified as a whole, there is an enclosure, the *Hangbebauung*, extending northward from the west side to gate. Little of the interior of this building was excavated, but its position would suggest that it had some function connected with administration and control of access to the citadel from the north.[10]

A wall connects the eastern side of the north gate to a distinctive building called the *Hallenbau* (Fig. 3). The part of this structure that gives it its name is a classic tripartite stable, where the central isle is marked off by an elevated wall on top up which were column bases. Horses, presumably, were kept on either side of this central isle. A group of rooms occupying a rectangular space with its long axis at right angles to that of the columned hall lies on the east side. In this was an L-shaped paved area that would have stabled a smaller number of horses and beside this was a storeroom with at least nine pithoi. Scratched on the rims of some of these abbreviated name of Bastam noted above was found (Fig. 5).[11] The largest room in this complex had a wide door opening to the south, which was later narrowed to a normal width, presumably when the function of the building changed.[12]

As one proceeds through the north gate, one ascends the citadel rock along an ascent path whose downhill side is formed and reinforced by a buttressed wall. This is one of the most conspicuous features of Bastam when viewed from the east (Fig. 6), but its primary function was to support the ascent route and not part of the perimeter defences of the citadel.

The western side of the ridge summit is today essentially a cliff, some of which has broken away since the Urartian period and taken parts of buildings with it. Most surviving foundation walls of the castle lie on the more gradually

[9] Kleiss 1988, 19.
[10] Kroll 1988, 96–97.
[11] Kroll 1988, 94.
[12] The layout suggests to the author that this building originally housed a chariot and the horses to equip it. This would be a logical place to station an elite transport, since a chariot would not be able ascend the citadel. In the site reports neither Kleiss nor Kroll addresses this issue.

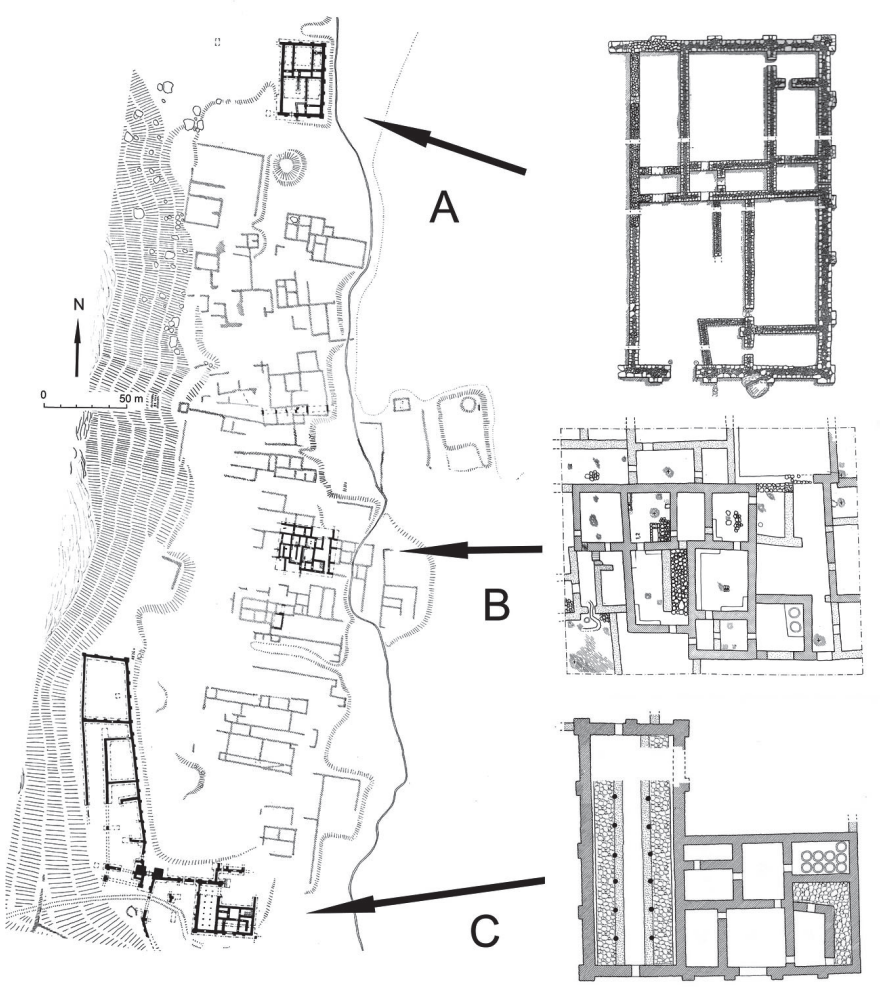

Fig. 3. Bastam settlement area and related public buildings:
A) *Nordgebäude* (after Kleiss 1973, 37); B) domestic buildings (after Kroll 1988, 85); and C) *Hallenbau* (after plans in Kleiss 1979, 35 with additional material from Kleiss 1988, 25). *Cf.* Fig. 1 for orientation.

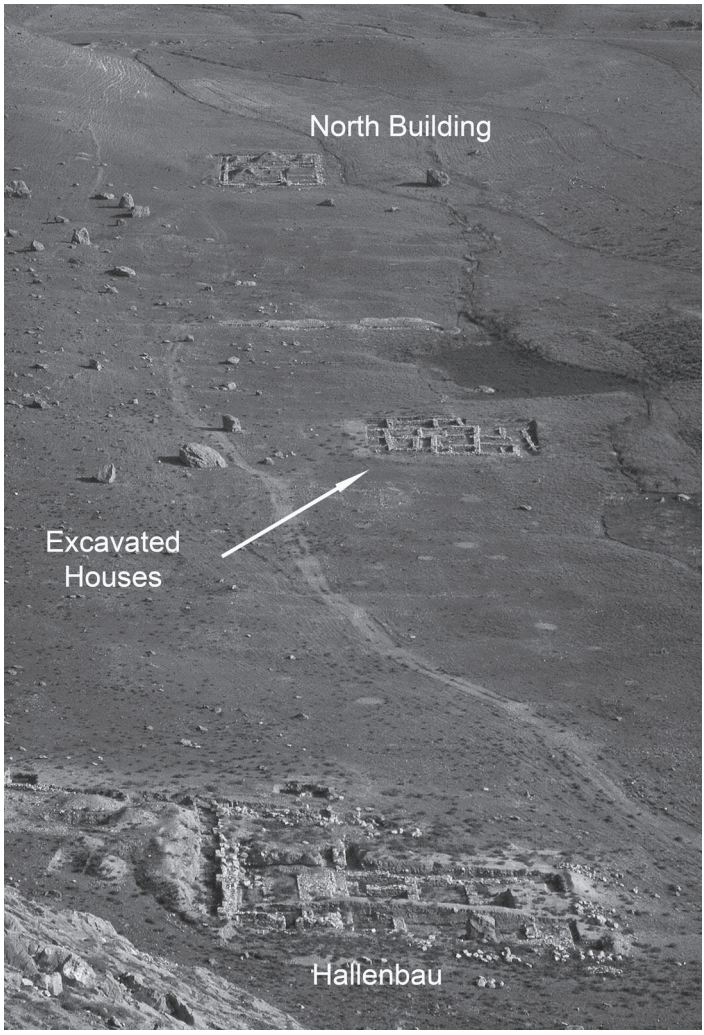

Fig. 4. Settlement area from citadel in 1977 (photograph by author).

sloped eastern side of the ridge. The buildings on the citadel were grounded on steps carved into bedrock at different elevations. Built in the customary Urartian fashion, the bottom parts of the walls were made of stone boulders with flatter sides outward to produce an even, but not rusticated, face. The stone base portions of the walls ranged from 1 to 3 m in height, and their tops were often stepped, even within the width of the wall. Wall thicknesses on the citadel varied between 2 and 5 m. A superstructure of mud-brick was constructed on

Fig. 5. Inscriptions bearing the ancient name of Bastam from pithoi in *Hallenbau*. Incised characters have been enhanced with chalk dust to increase visibility (photograph by author).

Fig. 6. Bastam citadel from north-east (photograph by author).

top of these stones, probably several stories high to judge by the thickness of the walls. Wooden beams running between the walls supported level floors at various elevations.[13] The violent destruction of this superstructure and the steepness of the slope left the ruins prey to erosion, so preservation is poor in what must have been the most central parts of the citadel. What remained to be excavated was material that had dropped into the basement levels from above.

Of the Upper Castle, where there was some medieval rebuilding, only parts of the Urartian stone foundations survived. Nothing much can be said of the buildings they supported except that they had narrow rooms and stepped down the slope. The footprint of the Upper Castle is not large. From its commanding position, one assumes that this was locus of highest prestige and the site of the palace or temple, but nothing in the foundations or finds here dictates that his must be so.

The juncture of the Middle and the Upper Castle was marked by a very thick wall stepping down the slope, and storerooms on either side of this were packed with burned and broken bones. Mixed among these were tear-shaped clay bullae, many of which were sealed with a stamp/cylinder seals of Rusa son of Argishti (Fig. 7). Sealings of the *asuli* type, with genii flanking a sacred tree on the rolling surface and a centaur on the round stamping end, were also in evidence, but in much smaller numbers.[14]

Large areas of the *Mittelburg* were apparently given over to storage facilities. These were also enclosed by buttressed fortifications, but much of the bedrock there was denuded and what soil remained was not excavated. It is generally assumed that there was a temple at Bastam[15], but there is no direct physical evidence of this. If such a temple was built at Bastam, parallels from other sites suggest it would have been within the fortress at a high elevation. In the Middle Castle there is an area of where the bedrock has been smoothed into a platform that would be of adequate size to accommodate such a building (Fig. 8). Fragments of a Rusa's standard building inscription – the same text which appears to have been found on the facade of the *susi* at Ayanis – have been identified by Salvini.[16]

The Lower Castle is on the westernmost part of the citadel rock, on a sort of step where the bedrock is only a few metres above the level of the Aq Çay. A series of very stout walls and hall-like buildings distinguished by rectangular pilasters extend over the southernmost end of the citadel rock. Access to this

[13] For example, Kleiss 1979, 87, Abb. 102.
[14] Seidl 1988, 145–46.
[15] For example Kroll 2011, 162, fig 15.
[16] *CTU* A 12-5.

Fig. 7. Royal sealings of Rusa son of Argishti from Bastam bone rooms (photograph by author). For descriptions and analysis, see Seidl 1988.

Fig. 8. Platform in the Middle Castle where temple might have stood (photograph by author).

area is provided by the south gate, beside which are narrow, elongated rooms which served for storage. Kleiss has identified several building phases in this area, in which the earliest gateway layout was crowded by structures added later. While the area was much damaged by erosion and later building activities, it seems reasonable to conclude that this area was devoted to administrative, garrisoning and economic functions associated with the primary access route into the innermost, and more elevated parts of the citadel.[17] In general, the structures here appear to have served economic functions, with storage jars and stone troughs remaining *in situ*. These, the presence of grinding stones and large jars containing grain, would suggest the presence of a bakery. Some buildings served as stables, indicating the elevation did not prevent horses or cattle from reaching this level. There are, incidentally, no stables in the Upper or Middle castles.

The *Ostbau*, a rectangular enclosure measuring 162 × 130 m, half again as large as a modern football pitch, was constructed on level ground in what is now a dry stream bed which has deposited much debris over the ruins since the Urartian period (Fig. 9). The construction technique visible in the walls and regularly spaced buttresses speak for a 7th-century BC date contemporary with the rest of the site, as does the pottery found within the building. There was a single entrance, beside which was a stabling area sufficient for roughly 60 horses.[18] The conclusion that his building had something to do with the Urartian military, and perhaps the cavalry specifically, seems inescapable.

Small Finds

Compared with Ayanis and Karmir-Blur, Bastam was not particularly rich in Urartian artefacts. To some extent, this may have been because of erosion, but it also appears the site was cleared of objects of art and materials that were regarded as valuable before it was put to the torch. Pottery, seal impressions and cuneiform notes produced by bureaucrats are the most important small finds, rather than bronzes, ceremonial objects, and royal display inscriptions. While the citadel was torched, the Lower Town was apparently abandoned peacefully, and in both cases the small finds were in discard contexts.

Two complete and two fragmentary tablets were discovered, but there also numerous notes written on the sites of bullae. One important bulla, from the Middle Castle but not in association with smaller bullae found among the

[17] Kroll 2011, 162.
[18] Kleiss 1988, 17.

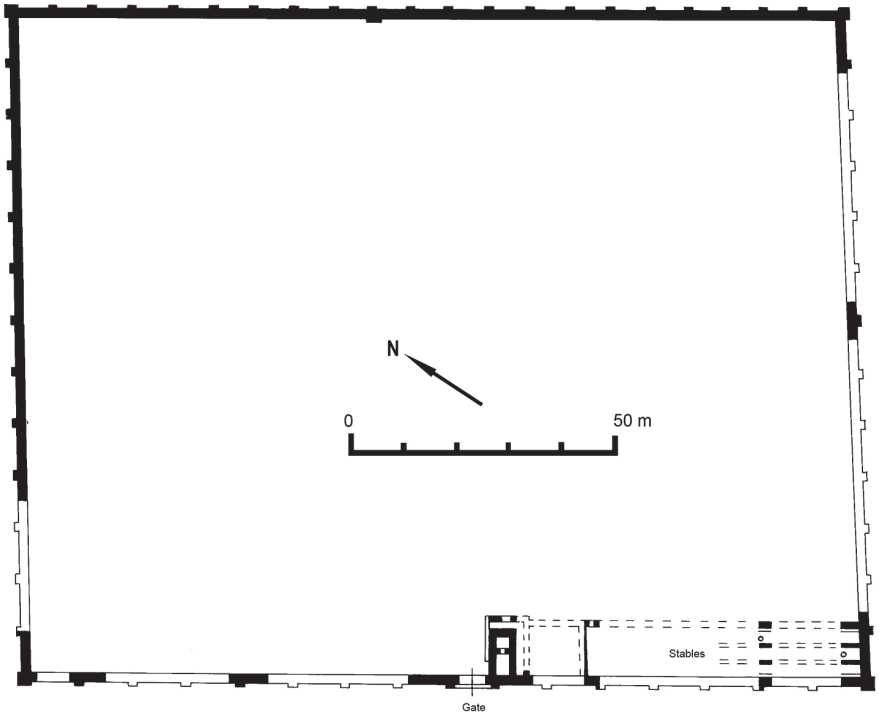

Fig. 9. East building (*Ostbau*) at Bastam (after Kleiss 1988, 16).

bones there, named setting up the throne in Rusahinili Qilbanikai (Toprakkale) as a year date (Fig. 10). Other inscribed bullae give place names from which commodities were sent. Bullae from many different parts of the site are impressed with a great variety of seal impressions. As noted above, these included sealings identified as belonging to Rusa son of Argishti, and *asuli* seals, which have names of individuals with patronymics of royal character and format, although we do not know if these people ruled. Not all sealings are of stamp/cylinder format – some are small rectangular stamps that evidence mounting wires and one left a pentagonal impression.[19]

Although a few studies of Urartian pottery had been made previously, the Bastam excavations were the first in Urartu to systematically study and publish anything like a full inventory. The Middle and Lower citadels were full of storage jars and wares for preparing and serving food were found in all parts of the site. The essentially one-period occupation of the mid-7th century BC

[19] Seidl 1988, 147–48.

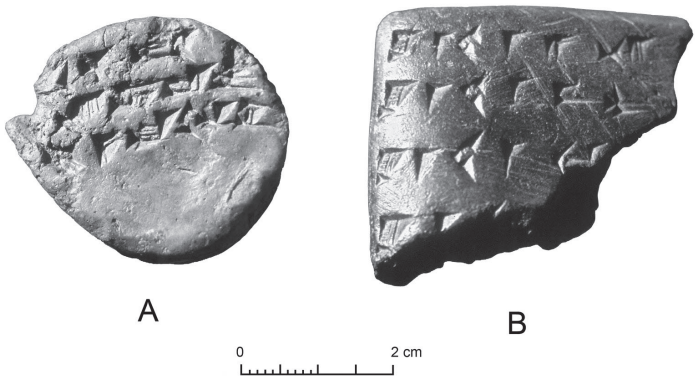

Fig. 10. Inscribed objects from Bastam: A) bulla with date formula of Rusa son of Argishti (text edition in Salvini 1988, 130); and B) tablet fragment (text edition in Salvini 1988, 128) (photograph by author).

and volume of sherds made this a benchmark for Urartian pottery. The various wares, including the distinctive *hoch poliert* ware that Charles Burney had termed 'Toprakkale Ware' were detailed in their relative abundance by Kroll.

Post-Urartian Remains

The citadel of Bastam suffered a violent destruction, for which the best evidence is in those places where substantial amounts of collapsed wall debris preserved materials to be excavated. In the Lower Town, particularly in the *Hallenbau*, there is some evidence of later, 6th-century BC occupation, although there is little to suggest the site had any prominence. In the mediaeval era, a smaller fortress was constructed on top of the highest parts of the Urartian citadel. These ruins were not well preserved and erosion has stripped away of most of the occupational debris that one would expect to find associated with them.

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SARDURİHİNİLİ–ÇAVUŞTEPE*

M. TANER TARHAN

Abstract

This chapter presents an exceptionally detailed examination of Çavuştepe Fortress and its constituent parts and buildings, also a short account of the nearby staging-post building at Çermik.

Sardurihinili/Çavuştepe is located on the Van–Hakkâri highway. The highway runs along the northern end of the fortress. Following the road by the southern shore of the lake, the fortress is 56 km from Van city centre; whereas following the mountain road that passes through the Kurubaş Pass (2225 m), it is 26 km from Van city centre (Fig. 3).

The fortress was built on a ridge of the western extension of the Bol mountain (2024 m) that stretches in an east–west direction, partly bisecting the fertile Gürpınar plain. Situated right to the west of the extension, on the flat plain, is Çavuştepe village. The Bol range is approximately 8–10 km long and is composed of seven or eight foothills. The range is lower in the west and reaches the plain elevation at the point corresponding to the current location of the village (Figs. 1–2).

Çavuştepe Fortress is a typical 'double fortress' and is located on the second and third foothills of the western end of the mountain range. The Upper Fortress is 110 m higher than the plain, whereas the Lower Fortress is 90 m higher. The fortification walls, terraces and other structures were planned exploiting the features of the topography to the utmost degree. This interesting practice is one of the most striking features of Urartian fortress and city architecture. On the other hand, both the Upper Fortress and the Lower Fortress are bordered and protected by very wide and deep rock moats in the east and the west. We had seen similar rock moats first in the capital city, Tushpa.[1]

* It is a pleasure for me to thank S. Merve Batıkan and Baha Batıkan for their technical assistance and Tan Erel for graphics in the preparation of my chapter.

[1] Erzen 1972a, 66; 1977a, 1, fig. 3 map; 1978, 57; 1988, 2, fig. 1 map, pl. A/a-b, pls. 1a, 3a–b (this is an English-language version of Erzen 1978c and all references in this chapter will be made to it rather than to the Turkish original); Tarhan 2004d, 81.

Fig. 1. Bol mountain chain, Upper Fortress and Lower Fortress from the north-west (photograph by A. Çilingiroğlu).

Fig. 2. Upper Fortress and Lower Fortress from the north-east, on the right Van–Hakkâri highway (photograph by A. Çilingiroğlu).

The connection between the Upper Fortress and the Lower Fortress was, again, built by taking advantage of the topography. The fortress is reached via the 'double-sloped road' in the northern end of the pass that connects the foothills.[2]

[2] Erzen 1972a, 67; 1978, 57; 1979a, 2; 1988, 2, pls. 4, 5a; Tarhan 2004d, 81.

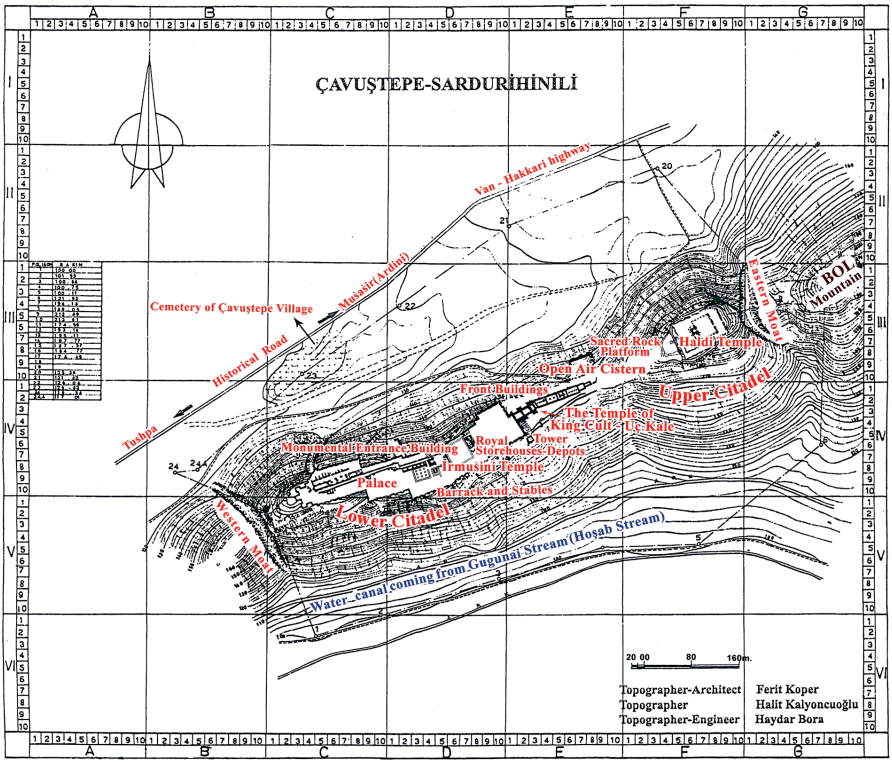

Fig. 3. Plan of Sardurihinili/Çavuştepe Fortress (adapted by author from Erzen 1988, fig. 1).

The historical road starts at Tushpa, passes through the northern outliers of the Çavuştepe Fortress (see Fig. 3), crosses the Kelishin Pass that is today within Iraq borders and then reaches the sacred historical city of Musasir/Ardini. Hence, a significant part of the current Van–Hakkâri highway follows this historical road (Figs. 2–4).

The inscription on the Irmushini temple states that the fortress was founded by one of the mightiest kings of the Urartu, Sarduri II (*ca.* 756–730 BC) and its name was Sardurihinili, meaning 'City of Sarduri' (see Irmushini temple).[3]

In the late 19th century, after the Urartian inscriptions that were discovered in the village of Çavuştepe – named as Astwadzaschen/Astvadzashen in those times – were published, it was set forth that the name of the fortress was Sardurihurda.[4]

[3] Erzen 1972a, 68; 1988, 1; Tarhan 2004d, 81.
[4] For details, see Adontz 1946, 234–36; Erzen 1988, 2.

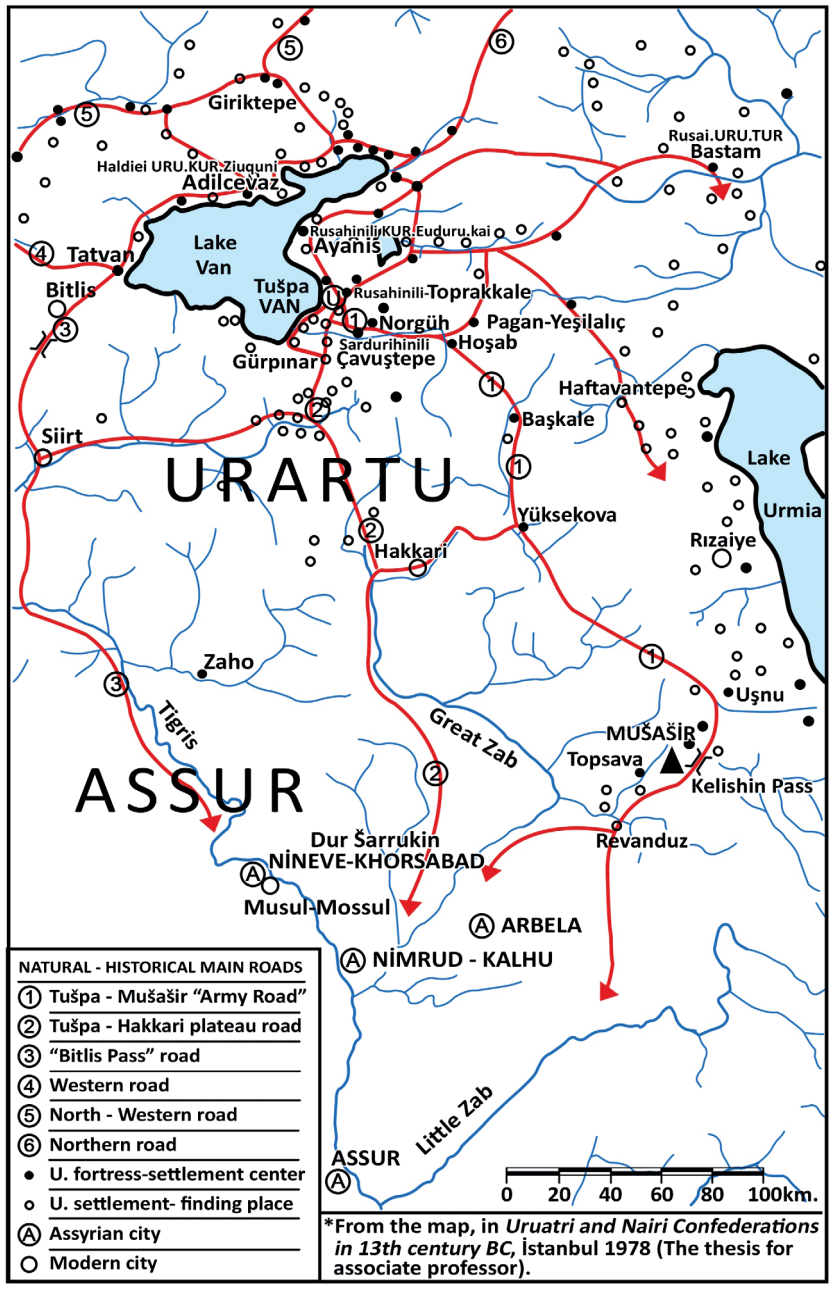

Fig. 4. Historical road between Tushpa and Musasir (author; drawing by T. Erel).

The fortress was referred to as Astwadzaschen for a long time. According to Johann Heinrich Hübschmann, it meant 'Built by God'.[5] It was also called Astvazazin.[6]

Later, following the foundation of the republic, in 1925, the fortress was given the name Asbaşı which then became Asbaşın.[7]

Particularly in the last quarter of the 19th century and early 20th century, the European powers interested themselves in the Armenian Question in an almost supervisory way (as in various other matters within the Ottoman empire). Several well-known scholars, for instance Henry Fanshawe Tozer, Ernest Chantre and Paul Müller-Simonis, were on the front lines with their publications covering these matters.[8] As noted in the chapter on Tushpa/Van Citadel below, their main source was the writings of Moses Khorenatsi (Moses of Khorene). Finally, insurgent Armenians rebelled, fierce combat took place, especially in Van, and much blood was spilt, mostly that of the locals.

Hayk had a summer house built on account of the war he had won against the Titans. Moses writes about this house as follows:

> (no. 11) … On the site of the battle he built a villa and called it Hayk on account of his victory; for that reason the district is now called Hayotsdzor. But the hill where Bel with his warriors fell, Hayk called Gerezmans; today it is called Gerezmank…

Hayotsdzor means 'Valley of the Armenians' in Armenian.[9] It is known as the Gürpınar plain today. Haik/Hayk is the legendary ancestor, the 'hero', the eponym of the Armenians. Bel (or Enlil) is one of the greatest gods of Assyria.[10]

Some scholars, who based their arguments on this account by Moses, began to refer to this magnificent Urartian fortress of Sardurihinili/Çavuştepe as Haikapert (= City of Haik).[11]

The British traveller Henry Lynch wrote:

> … The city of Hayk, as it has long been called, in the Hayotz-dzor, south-east of Van, has disclosed to the first essays of the modern archaeologist the familiar features of a Khaldian settlement… The ruins of an Armenian fortress may still be seen with the gorge. Its ancient name was Haykaberd…[12]

[5] Hübschmann 1904, 403: von *astvac* = '*Gott*' + *šen* = 'von *Gott* gebaut'; Cuinet 1892, 702; Lehmann-Haupt 1926, 60; Adontz 1946, 177, 236: 'Astowaçaśen'; Erzen 1988, 1, n. 2.

[6] Adontz 1946, 177, 236.

[7] Erzen 1988, see for details, p. 1, n. 3.

[8] Tozer 1881, 315; Chantre 1889, 282; Müller-Simonis 1897, 135, 178–79.

[9] Hübschmann 1904, 343, no. 85.

[10] Erzen (1988, 1, n. 4) provides details about the old arguments on the origin of the Armenians and particularly about the contradictory narrative that presents Hayk and Bel together.

[11] Cuinet 1892, 702; Belck 1893a, 198; 1893b, 79; 1895, 606.

[12] Lynch 1901, 71, 177.

In Johann Hübschmann: '…"Haigapert", "Haikpert" oder "Haykay berd" Ruinen einer Burg im K. Hayoths dzor…'.[13]

As mentioned in the Tushpa/Van chapter, Carl Lehmann-Haupt was a very well-known scholar. However, it is thought-provoking that he defends the name Haikapert without really any scientific filter, using 'von Gott gebaut' (that God had built), 'Chalderburg Haikapert' (Chaldian Fortress Haikapert) 'Chaldian' (Urartian), 'Feste des Haik' (Fortress of Haik).[14] It is evident from the narrative that those from the Armenian village of Astvazazin conveyed that the fortress belonged to Haik.[15] In his political and intentional statements, it is clear that he used his scholarship in support of the Armenian Question.[16]

According to the current beliefs of Çavuştepe villagers and locals, the fortress was taken from the infidels by the Prophet Ali and belongs to the Prophet Ali. Afif Erzen also emphasises that the very fact that the names Haik and Prophet Ali have been ascribed to the fortress clearly indicates that it had been significant for the locals for hundreds of years.[17]

Research – Excavations

It is not known by whom the Çavuştepe Fortress was first discovered. According to Erzen, the fortress drew attention after the Armenian antique merchant and smuggler Sedrak Devgants took a depot inscription he had found in the old Çavuştepe village to Vienna in November 1884; the inscription was published by David Heinrich Müller.[18]

That same year, in his letter to the Russian scholar K. Patnakov, Devgants listed the precious pieces found in the ruins of Toprakkale, stating that they belonged to him and adding that a high number of pieces had also been found when he was younger.[19] This letter and pieces in various museums and collections outside Turkey are clear pieces of evidence for the implacable depredation of Toprakkale.

[13] Hübschmann 1904, 443.
[14] Lehmann-Haupt 1926, 60; and see n. 36 below.
[15] Erzen 1988, 1, n. 4.
[16] Lehmann-Haupt 1926, 454, 677–81; 1931, 801–03, 834–36, 848–50, 940–42, 1040–42, 1045–47; Erzen 1988, 1, n. 4; Tarhan 2001, 539; 2004a, 80.
[17] Erzen 1988, 1, n. 4.
[18] Müller 1885; Erzen 1988, 2, n. 7.
[19] Barnett 1954, 16.

We know that Waldemar Belck also came to Çavuştepe in 1891 while he was conducting research in Van and its surroundings. The ground floor in the 'Palace' area, where rock cisterns – only two of which had open mouths then – were found, was interpreted as a 'sacred' structure.[20]

Carl Friedrich Lehmann-Haupt was a close friend of Belck. They worked together in Toprakkale and Van Citadel between 1898 and 1899. The first research that can be considered scientific was conducted by Lehmann-Haupt in 1899. Like his predecessors, he emphasised that Çavuştepe was a Chalderburg/Urartian fortress and he provided very detailed definitions. The draft plan of the northern fortification walls and the palace in particular captures attention.[21] In addition, a schematic plan showing the fortress, the palace and the fortification walls was drawn (Fig. 5).

After a long time, the British archaeologist Charles Burney investigated Çavuştepe while he was conducting research on Urartian fortresses and settlements in the Van region in 1956. He presented the fortress under the name Asbaşın, along with a draft plan (Fig. 6).[22]

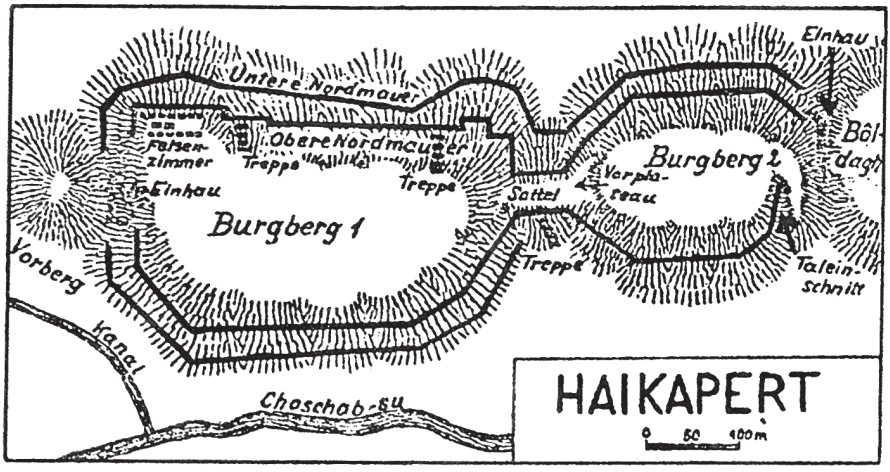

Fig. 5. Draft plan of Sardurihinili/Çavuştepe Fortress in 1899 (after Lehmann-Haupt 1926).

[20] Belck 1893b, 79. Lehmann-Haupt is also of the same opinion (1926, 63).
[21] Lehmann-Haupt 1926, 60–63.
[22] Burney 1957, 45–48, pls. IVa, Va.

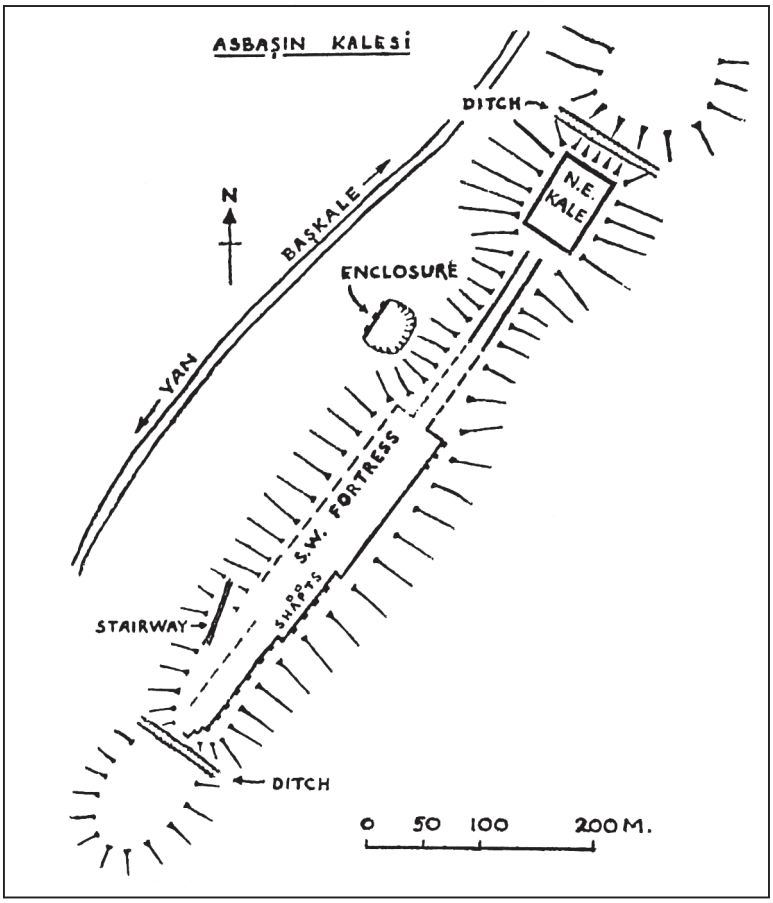

Fig. 6. Draft plan of Asbaşın Fortress in 1956 (after Burney 1957, pl. 4a).

During his Toprakkale excavations, Erzen carried out investigatory expeditions with Emin Bilgiç, Yusuf Boysal, Baki Öğün, in particular to find out more about the fortification systems. In the meantime, he also investigated Çavuştepe in 1959. As a result of his more detailed investigations later in 1960, he decided definitely to conduct excavations here. These started in 1961, with the same team. In 1964, a new team was formed and excavations continued uninterruptedly for 25 years until 1986.[23] The whole of Çavuştepe Fortress was excavated, to the enrichment of Turkish and world archaeology.

[23] News of commencement: Erzen 1962, 623. For Çavuştepe excavation reports, news, declarations and articles until 1978, see Erzen 1988, 4, n. 16; for all between 1962 and 1987, see Tarhan 2004c, 22–26.

With firm scientific evidence, Erzen responded appropriately to the persistent and one-sided publications on Çavuştepe and eliminated some very grave mistakes. As will be shown in detail below, the 13th-century Armenian settlement was in the form of a small village settlement. The fortress is rightly identified with Erzen.[24] (I should mention at this point that I worked there for many years, first as an intern and then as deputy to Erzen.[25])

In the meantime, several scholars visited the fortress. Thomas Forbes came to Çavuştepe in September 1976 while preparing his book *Urartian Architecture*, in which he published a draft plan – drawn by himself – of the fortress, along with a brief explanation.[26]

Location

We have underlined that Sardurihinili/Çavuştepe was built as a double fortress on the Gürpınar plain, along the second and third foothills of the western extension of the Bol mountain. The fortress has a strategic location overlooking the fertile plain, which stretches towards Lake Van, and the very important historical routes across the plain. In addition, it is in a position to control the Hoşab-Güzelsu watercourse that passes through the southern parts of the plain to meet Lake Van, making these lands very fertile.

We name fortresses of this type 'hill fortresses'. They are situated either in a mountain range or on a high mountain, attached to the mountain behind via a pass and overlooking a plain stretching below along the mountain's skirts.[27] There are many examples, such as Körzüt, Çavuştepe, Ayanis, Armavir-Blur and Bastam fortresses, but at Çavuştepe there is no Lower City, making it one of two exceptional fortresses; the other is the second centre of governance, Rusahinili/Toprakkale. In my opinion, the term 'civilisation of the mountains' ascribed to the Urartians is appropriate. Another example is the title of the book by Burney and David Lang: *The Peoples of the Hills*.[28]

Why Urartian hill fortresses were built is clear. In addition to our explanations above, a primary reason is 'strong defence against strong enemies'. However, it was a traditional tactic to leave the fortress when necessary and to escape by running away up to the peaks of the high mountains behind. If the enemy followed, they would have been used to fighting in these steep places.

[24] Tarhan 2004a, 80; see also Sevin 2003, 3–10.
[25] Tarhan 1987, 49; 2001, 540.
[26] Forbes 1983, 23–24, 80, fig. 13 sketch plan.
[27] Tarhan and Sevin 1977a, 298.
[28] Tarhan 2004a, 83: Burney and Lang 1971.

In the Assyrian royal inscriptions that cover the Urartian kingdom, which followed the Ur(u)atri and Nairi confederations of the 13th–9th centuries BC, battles against the Urartians in steep mountains are narrated with every detail.[29] In the bronze reliefs of the famous Imgur-Bel (Balawat Gate) that belonged to king Shalmaneser III (858–824 BC), the Assyrians depicted the massacre they committed in the mountain cities of Arzashkun and Sugunia while the cities were aflame. The locational characteristics of these two cities were also described visually in the inscriptions.[30]

No evidence of this sort has arisen from the excavations conducted at the peak of Bol mountain or in the surrounding area, but as excavations continued, it was understood that the relentless Scythian attacks which ended life at the fortress were very sudden indeed. In other words, there was no chance to escape and take shelter on the mountain peak.

The Gürpınar is one of the largest plains located by the lake in the Van region. Its covers approximately 190 km², it is 40 km long and 2–5 km wide. It is 1760 m above sea level; it is also called the Micinger plain. Evidently, this fertile plain had been an area for settlement long before the Urartian kingdom. For instance, it is known that Old Norgüh, situated a few kilometres north-east of Çavuştepe, had been settled since the Early Transcaucasian period of the 3rd millennium BC.[31] In 1971, the author and Veli Sevin reported in detail on a small hill fortress found here, also pinpointing the ruins of the Lower City that stretched across a wide area.[32] The Iremir Mound, situated approximately 5 km south-west of Çavuştepe, also shows that the settlement history of the plain goes back to the 3rd millennium BC.[33]

As narrated in the inscription on the Irmushini temple, Sarduri II indicated that this area was infertile and that he opened a canal from the Gugunai river and planted vineyards and orchards (see below). The Gugunai is the Hoşab-Güzelsu of today, also referred to as Zernek Water after it enters the plain. Situated in the east of the plain is the Hoşab plain; the two plains are separated by a narrow pass and a steep area that is rocky in both sides.[34] As mentioned in the inscription and at the beginning of this section, the Hoşab river and this canal were used to irrigate the fortress land and all of the royal land thereabouts: farmlands, vineyards and orchards.

[29] *ARAB* I, nos. 112, 144, 236, 361, 501, 632, 718, 769, 813; II, nos. 10, 56, 154, 155, 213 etc.; Grayson 1975, no. 4.
[30] For details, see King 1915.
[31] Tarhan and Sevin 1977a, 286; Sevin 1998, 717, 720, no. 9, 726, pl. 5.9.
[32] Tarhan and Sevin 1977a, 287–95, fig. 2 plan, pls. 1, 11–15, 17–20.
[33] Burney 1958, 172, map 1, 178.
[34] Tarhan and Sevin 1977a, 286.

In the central region and beyond, hundreds of fortresses and settlement areas were built along natural historical main roads and their branches, at strategic points and passes critical in terms of transport, military operations, defence, etc. The aim was to execute the state's settlement policy, arising from its social structure, and for military, administrative and economic purposes. This enabled the state to control the road network that spread throughout the state and provided communication with neighbouring states. In addition, situated along these roads were small fortresses, station houses and observation points, as well as, staging posts, the antique predecessors of the caravanserais. Thereby, the king's management and control of the state and the regions became effective, fast and functional. It should be noted that very difficult, tangible and intangible struggles must have taken place considering the natural environment and climatic conditions in the regions where the state of Urartu extended – eastern and south-eastern Anatolia, Transcaucasia, north-western Iran, etc.[35]

The historical road from the Tushpa to the sacred city of Musasir passed by the northern foot of Çavuştepe Fortress, which could observe and control it (Fig. 2).

The road that follows the southern shore of the lake continues eastwards from the crossroads at Edremit and reaches the Gürpınar plain, meeting near Gürpınar town the short route coming from the 'mountain road'. It then turns east, passes south of Çermik staging post, situated south-west of Çavuştepe Fortress, and continues to the fortress. These connecting roads to Musasir are approximately 400 km long. Çavuştepe Fortress was the biggest, strongest and most impressive on this route. It was connected to this historical road via a double-sloped road with retaining walls (Figs. 7–8).

Lehmann-Haupt mentioned the road as 'alten chaldischen strasse' and also named it as 'Armee Strasse'; these are very appropriate reflections.[36] However, influenced by the primacy of the god Haldi, until the 1950s, many of those who studied Urartu, including Lehmann-Haupt, mistakenly insisted on using Chaldisch/Haldian and Chaldischen/Chalder/Haldili instead of Urartian and Urartu.

Lehmann-Haupt and Belck investigated this road network thouroughy for almost two years. The roads were supported by strong sustaining walls and were approximately 2.50–3.00 m wide. They recounted in detail – as far as they could see them – all the structures such as the fortress, staging posts, that the road network carried the features of the topography and was wide enough for all units of the army (cavalry, war waggons, logistical support carriages

[35] Tarhan 1983, 304; 1986, 294.
[36] Lehmann-Haupt 1926, 302–05; Salvini 2006, 17.

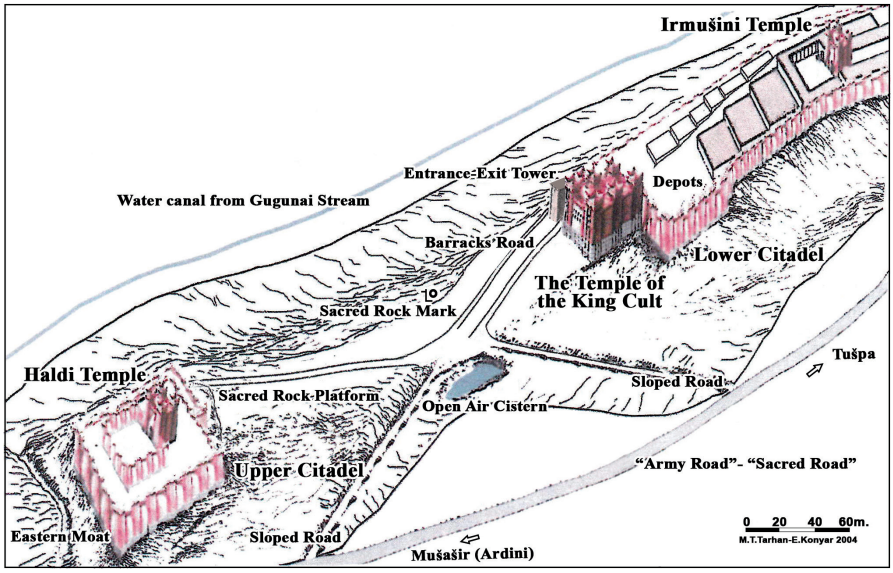

Fig. 7. Realisation of the Sardurihinili/Çavuştepe Fortress (M. Taner Tarhan and E. Konyar).

that conveyed all the equipment for military expeditions and the infantry) to pass through easily.[37]

According to the archaeological data and the inscription on the Kelishin stele, road construction must have started under Ishpuini (*ca.* 820–810 BC). The stele was erected on the Kelishin Pass (3000 m) by Ishpuini and his son Minua. The fact that the inscription reads 'I' rather than 'we', shows that the inscription was actually written by the real ruler, king Ishpuini. It is a rare example of a bilingual inscription in Urartian and Assyrian.[38] Regarding the road, the emphasis of 'main road' in the Topzawa stele – also bilingual – that belonged to Rusa I is noteworthy.[39]

According to the Kelishin inscription, in around 810 BC Ishpuini and Minua paid a religious visit/pilgrimage to the god Haldi's place of worship in Musasir. In fact, this visit had a political purpose. Ishpuini was clearly bringing his kingdom under Haldi's patronage, but he was also announcing his

[37] Belck and Virchow 1899, 110; Lehmann-Haupt 1926, 302–09.

[38] Lehmann-Haupt 1928, no. 13; König 1955–57, no. 9; *UKN* 19; Payne 2006, no. 3.2.10; Salvini 2006, 53.

[39] Lehmann-Haupt 1928, no. 122; *UKN* 264; Payne 2006, no. 10.1.1; Salvini 2006, 93.

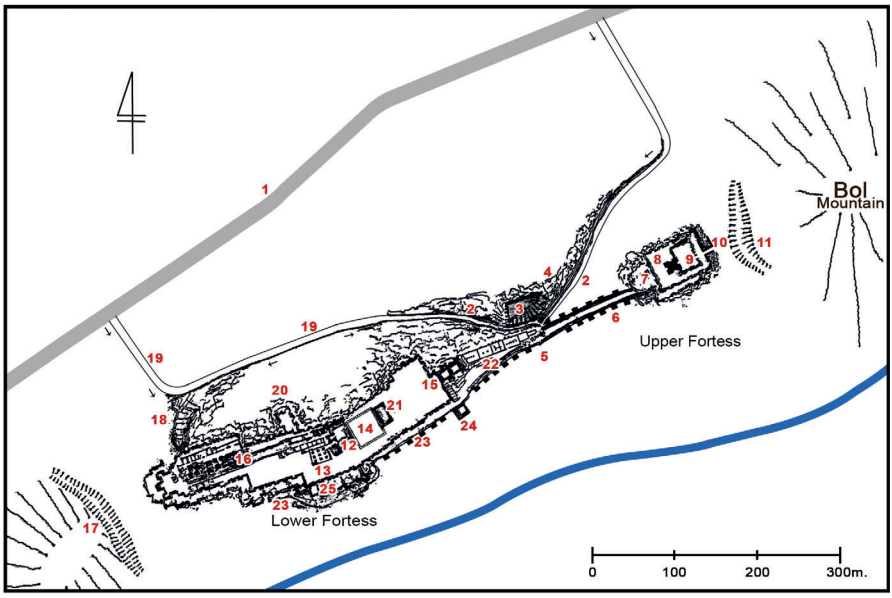

Fig. 8. Reconstruction of topographical situation plan of the Sardurihinili Fortress: (1) Historical/military/sacred road from Tushpa to Musasir, (2) Double-sloped road, (3) Open air cistern, (4) Main gate, (5) Sacred rock mark, (6) Fortified road, (7) Sacred rock platform, (8) Haldi temple, (9) Entrance of *temenos*, (10) Outer entrance, (11) Eastern moat, (12) Irmushini temple, (13) Pillared hall and, to the north of it, rooms and workshops of prayers, (14) Monumental entrance building, (15) The temple of the King's Cult-Uç Kale, (16) Provincial Palace, (17) Western moat, (18) Natural rock cleft, (19) Provisions road, (20) Grand tower, (21) Royal storehouses and depots, (22) Front buildings, (23) Barracks road, (24) Entrance tower, (25) Barracks and stables (author).

own sovereignty and challenging his enemies in the region around this place of worship. These lands were very close to the north-eastern border of the great power of those times, Assyria. This was, in many dimensions, a very wise progress, a revolution for the Urartu since Musasir was then a city-state and an international centre of worship. This was from then on an Urartian province. The inscription begins with royal titles that bear certain templates and:

> … When Ishpuini, son of Sarduri, and Minua, son of Ishpuini, arrived in the city of Ardini [Musasir], to the presence of God Haldi, they had a house (temple) built and had a stele erected for God Haldi. In front of the temple, Ishpuini, son of Sarduri, offered perfect spears, offered high quality cattle… offered copper pots…and offered again cattle. (These) He put in front of Haldi's door and gave to Master God Haldi, the joy of our lives…

The rest of the inscription narrates that cattle, nanny goats and lamb were sacrificed. In my opinion, as in the 'Sacred Area of Mother and Daughter' (see below) built by order of Sarduri II in Tushpa, it was impossible to have thousands of sacrifices. Ishpuini had offered sacrifices as gifts to the place of worship. Undoubtedly, there was blood sacrifice. The royal titles are repeated and then the inscription ends with '… These were placed on the road in front of the Gate of Haldi…'. The curse prayer that follows is: '… god Haldi, god Teisheba, god Shivini and gods of the city of Musasir, eradicate his lineage from the world'.

The names of neither the chief god Haldi nor the storm god Teisheba nor the sun god Shivini exist in the six-times repeating Sardursburg/Madırburç inscriptions discovered in Tushpa, belonging to Sarduri I (*ca*. 840–830 BC), the founder of the Urartian kingdom.

With the introduction of the Haldi cult in Urartu, the monarchic + theocratic system was adopted gradually in the course of time and a state religion was established that became one of the keystones of the state and had a unifying function. Ishpuini was the first Urartian king to use the religion factor. The chief god of the pantheon was Haldi (main god/national god/state god), with Teisheba and Shivini as the other great gods. As the founding god, he represented the state and the divine power of the state. The state religion served to unify Urartu itself, the conquered lands and the societies just settling in. The Urartian pantheon, founded on certain rules, was broadly based, including all gods and beliefs and was sanctified by the Hurri, the 'related' peoples of Urartian lineage and foreign ethnic societies living on state lands.[40] The king was the greatest High Priest of Haldi and all gods of the pantheon. He defined himself as the attendant of Haldi. The clear evidence for this is the inscription from the monumental sacred rock niche of Meher Kapısı, situated on the skirts of the Zimzim mountain north-west of Tushpa.[41] It is in the form of a stepped-frame temple gate; gods were believed to come out of this gate.[42] 'Ishpuini, son of Sarduri, and Minua, son of Ishpuini, had this gate built for Master God Haldi and gave an order…'.

[40] Tarhan 1983, 298–300; 1986, 288–90; Salvini 2011, 86.

[41] Schulz 1840, no. 17; Sayce 1888, 6–9; Sandalgian 1900, no. 42; Lehmann-Haupt 1928, no. 18, tab. 7–10; König 1955–57, no. 10; *UKN* 27; Payne 2006, no. 3.2.1, figs. 13–14.

[42] Tarhan and Sevin 1975, 396, 408–10, figs. 6, 8a–b, 11; Sinclair 1987, 188, pl. 14. 'Yeşilalıç. Pagan Monumental Rock Niche' resembling Meher Kapısı, built by Ishpuini and Minua in the same period, is located 60 km east of Van, in the south of Özalp. However, the inscription text is different and shorter. Architectural variety spread over a wide area proves that this was an entirely 'sacred area' (see Sevin and Belli 1977).

In the inscription, following the order and as an explanation of the rules of the sacrifice ceremony, there is a long list of the number and types of sacrificial offerings to the gods and goddesses, divine objects and Haldi's deified features, listed in order of importance. It can be inferred from the end of the inscription that during the crop and grape harvests, a grand Sacrifice Feast was celebrated at this open-air temple. In addition, apart from being the god of war, Haldi's attributes included protector of farming, vineyards and orchards and animal breeding, all being the foundations of life.[43]

These repeated elaborate feasts emphasised that Ishpuini and his family, his reign and the future Urartian dynasty handed down from father to son, were under the protection and security of the national god Haldi and all the state pantheon; the feasts were very significant because of their content.

However, Haldi, was a 'foreign' god. The tradition of his cult is very old. In North Mesopotamia, the name Haldi, bearing a divine element, is seen in Mid-Assyrian-period documents. No relationship could be established with the peoples from Hurrian-Urartian language and cultural tradition.

Nevertheless, Teshub (Teisheba) and Shimigi (Shivini) were Hurrian gods.[44] As a result, Ishpuini could realise, to the extent he had desired, his ideology of sovereignty and protection over the sacred city of Musasir and the structuring of the state religion. This place remained within Urartian borders until the Assyrian king Sargon II's eighth campaign in 714 BC. However, after this date, Tushpa Kelishin, the military road, lost its importance for the Urartian state; there are no records of any campaigns to this area in Urartian sources.

Back to the road. After passing by Çavuştepe Fortress, we reach Old Norgüh, situated at a very significant point on this road. The small fortress here lies on a rocky hill whose south and east sides are steep and 50–60 m high. In line with traditional practice, to the north-west it connects with the hills behind. It has a highly strategic location in that it controls the east side of the Gürpınar plain and a very important pass that provides entry to it from the plain from the east. It is an outpost built to protect Çavuştepe Fortress from any danger that could come from the east. The Lower City covers a very wide area.[45]

Hoşab Fortress is situated on the road that follows the Hoşab valley and, being at the meeting point of the historical roads, it has a very strategic location. It is much bigger than the Old Norgüh Fortress. It is on top of a very high and steep rocky area that is very hard to reach. It could control all surrounding area with almost a 'bird's eye view'. We have investigated the fortress several times.

[43] Salvini 2006, 46, 53; 2011, 86.
[44] For complete information, see Salvini 2006, 46–49; 2011, 86.
[45] See n. 32 above; see also Sinclair 1987, 221.

The foundations hewn into the bedrock – an element of Urartian rock architecture – and the building stones used in later periods as spolia, the basalt 'blind window' in 'T' form placed as an architectural element beneath the Ottoman building inscription at the impressive main gate of the fortress, altogether prove that this structure was built in the Urartian period (most probably by Ishpuini and Minua). It was rebuilt as a magnificent fortress in the 17th century by the Ottomans.[46]

Rusa I (*ca*. 730–714/3 BC) used the military road for the last time. The political games of Urzana – mentioned as king of Musasir – and his coalition with Assyria caused Rusa to conduct an expedition to Musasir, defeating Urzana but installing him to serve as vassal king of Musasir. In the meantime, Rusa stayed in Musasir for 15 days and organised religious ceremonies and also festivals for the locals. These are narrated in the Topzawa stele.[47]

Assyrian king Sargon II (721–705 BC) completed his preparations and undertook his eighth campaign. Seeing this as an opportunity, Rusa I crossed the borders and destroyed and looted several Assyrian fortresses. In revenge, Sargon II ended his famous campaign in Musasir. The sacred city and Haldi temple were burnt down and demolished, all valuables were looted and taken to Assyria along with hostages.[48] The importance of the military road/sacred road is clear.

Sardurihinili/Çavuştepe and Rusahinili/Toprakkale are peculiar in not having Lower Cities. Çavuştepe is also special from another aspect, there is the Haldi temple in the Upper Fortress, whereas in the Lower Fortress, there is the Irmushini temple. This is a very rare feature of the Urartian fortresses, actually, almost never seen. The temple of the king cult is yet another exception. Hence, this fortress was a 'religious centre'. The temples and the 'sacred areas' will be presented in order.

According to the evidence we have, in addition to this feature, the fortress was also the provincial centre. The *EN.NAM* (provincial governor), appointed by the king, lived at the palace here. The *EN.NAM* was seen first in the inscriptions of Minua and later in those of Argishti I, Sarduri II and of Rusa I. The *EN.NAM* collected taxes on behalf of the king, controlled all types of production and stored the produce at the provincial centres he governed. His other responsibilities included providing for the security of the province and the region, executing development and reconstruction works and, in times of war,

[46] Sinclair 1987, 212–15, plan on 213, pls. 34–37 (37 for Ottoman building inscription and 'blind windows').

[47] See n. 39 above; Salvini 2006, 92.

[48] For details of these events, the suicide of Rusa I and sources, see my Tushpa/Van paper below, pp. 696–97.

standing by the king's side along with fully equipped cavalry, infantry, war carriages and logistical support units responsible for victualling.[49]

The existence of a strong garrison ready and on duty at Çavuştepe Fortress at all times accentuates the fact that the fortress was a strong military centre. Every need, above all nutrition, of not only the soldiers but also of the servants, the royal family at Çavuştepe and the priests in the temples, was provided for. There were also various types of production workshop.

Its huge wheat storehouses, hundreds of large pithoi in which all types of products and food were stored, food and beverage supplies stored in other large storages jars, the rock cisterns at the palace and the total capacity of these, clearly signify that this fortress was also a strong economic centre.

This vast stock of the royal storehouses much exceeded the needs of the fortress residents and the soldiers at war, despite all the 'surplus produce' sent to the capital, the long winter season, droughts, floods and earthquakes, contagious diseases, enemy attacks and sieges.[50]

This analysis answers the question of why is there no lower city.

As an aside: in accordance with state rules, all newly founded cities were named after either the 'founder' king or the god of the region: *Haldie* URU (city of Haldi), *Teishebai* URU (Teishebaini/city of Teisheba = Karmir-Blur), etc.[51]

The Architecture of Some Important Structures and the 'Sacred Rock Mark'

With its magnificent temples, sacred places, unique rock cisterns, two-storeyed Provincial Palace (one of a kind), royal storehouses and depots, grand open-air cistern, double-sloped road and fortification walls with impressive defence systems, Çavuştepe Fortress is a special structure of Urartian architecture. During the period of Sarduri II (*ca.* 756–730 BC), the Upper Fortress and the Lower Fortress were separate without any connection in between. The Sacred Road extending to the Upper Fortress was not yet fortified (Fig. 7).

The Upper and Lower fortresses do not have main gates (Figs. 2, 7, 8.4). The double-sloped road with strong retaining walls and supports, built at the same time with the Sardurihinili Fortress, in the 8th century BC, meets at the neck section connecting the two hills.

[49] For related inscriptions and detailed information, see Tarhan 1983, 301; 1986, 291–93.
[50] Tarhan 1983, 305; 1986, 296; 2007a, 116; 2007b, 266.
[51] Tarhan 1983, 298, 300; 1986, 288, 291.

As the fortress continued to develop and the economic necessities increased, new buildings had to be erected outside the fortification walls. The Uç Kale front buildings were built for this same reason in the 7th century BC. The Main Gate is situated at the eastern end of these buildings.

During the time of Rusa II (*ca*. 685–645 BC), the Upper and Lower fortresses were connected with these buildings, a strong fortification system and the 'fortified road'. Hence, the buildings, the Main Gate, front and inner courtyard and the southern section were taken under protection.[52] The fortified road that goes up to the Upper Fortress and the sacred rock platform meets the fortification walls.

As the Lower Fortress was situated at the far eastern end, Erzen named the gate East Gate and East Main Gate. This is a new type of Urartian gate architecture. The *in-situ* shaft-bearing of the double-wing gate and the wooden remains of the gate frame and its threshold draw our attention. The gate is 3.80 m wide. Only one of the limestone blocks of the bearing that carried the heavy gate-wings was discovered. It was located inside the east wing of the gate. The double-sloped road and the courtyard are covered with flagstones and have been eroded as a result of intensive use; the surfaces look as if they had been polished. The gate is not very important strategically. There are not even any fortification walls on the southern side. It is partially protected by the levelled low terrace walls on the southern side. The roads that lie between the terrace walls extend towards the fortification walls to the south of the Lower Fortress. In case of a siege of the gate by the enemy forces, the Uç Kale front buildings – meaning the workshop buildings and others – would be affected first. As these are not directly related to the Lower Fortress, Çavuştepe Fortress would not be affected much. However, in times of peace, the gate played an important role in controlling the entry into and exit from the fortress. For the reasons just mentioned, it differs from the standard gate buildings of Urartu.[53]

A grand open air cistern is situated right below the courtyard in front of the Main Gate, half way along the double-sloped road (Figs. 2–3, 7, 8.3, 9). The cistern rests on a cliff behind and its strong walls, more than 2 m thick, were built of cyclopean stones. The lower part, resembling a gigantic pool, was entirely hewn into bedrock. The drainage system comprised a very useful two-phased channel/canal that enabled the irrigation of the plain to the north of the fortress whenever needed. The system also provided water for the fortress. The canal system hewn into the bedrock and reaching the cistern from the cliff

[52] Erzen 1976, 712; 1988, 32–34.
[53] Erzen 1988, 32, pls. 12a–c, 21a–b, 31a–b, 32a–c, 33a–b, 34a–b.

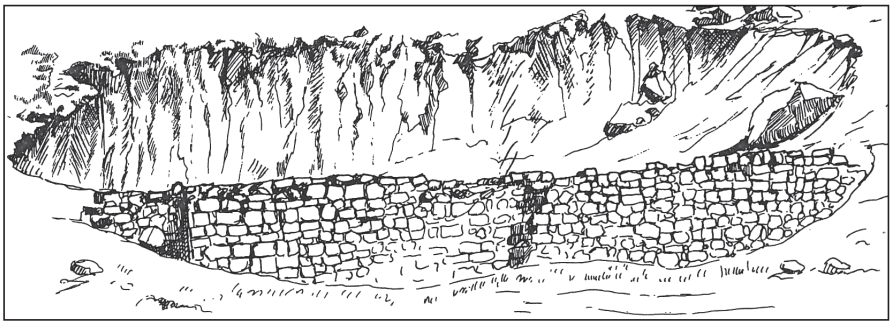

Fig. 9. Open air cistern, from the north (drawing by A. Dai; after Erzen 1988, fig. 48).

to the north-east shows how melting snow and rainwater were directed to and accumulated. In my opinion, snow was also accumulated for water supply. A five-stepped ladder, partially hewn into the bedrock is found outside the cistern's western wall. It reaches the canal's mouth down below. Erzen defines the cistern as the 'Stall of the State'.[54] However, it is utterly impossible to bring and keep cavalry horses, war carriages and the garrison here.

A sacred rock mark (Figs. 7, 8.5, 10) is situated on the southern hillside of the fortress, approximately 80 m south-west of the Main Gate, on a sloping rock surface. The drainage canal that runs down the cliff is approximately 3.20 m long. It is round-shaped with a diameter of around 1.40 m. In terms of its size and shape, it is one of its kind in Urartu. It has been suggested that these rock marks carried religious meanings and were sacred places relating to cult practices.[55]

Upper Fortress

Evidently, the Upper Fortress was entirely a sacred fortress. It is the first example of an Urartian fortress whose sole purpose was religious. The fortress was equipped with a fine temple, built in the name of the chief god, Haldi, and with other private structures belonging to the temple.[56]

[54] Erzen 1967, 468; 1988, 13, fig. 48, pls. 4, 5a, 7a.

[55] Erzen 1968, 418; Belli 1989, 70, 94, fig. 1, pls. 4.2, 5, map 1 on 104, table on 105. For details and those in other areas, see Belli 1979, *passim*.

[56] Erzen 1977a, 13; 1979b, 261; Tarhan 2004a, 81; 2007a, 116; 2007b, 266.

Fig. 10. Sacred rock mark (author's archive).

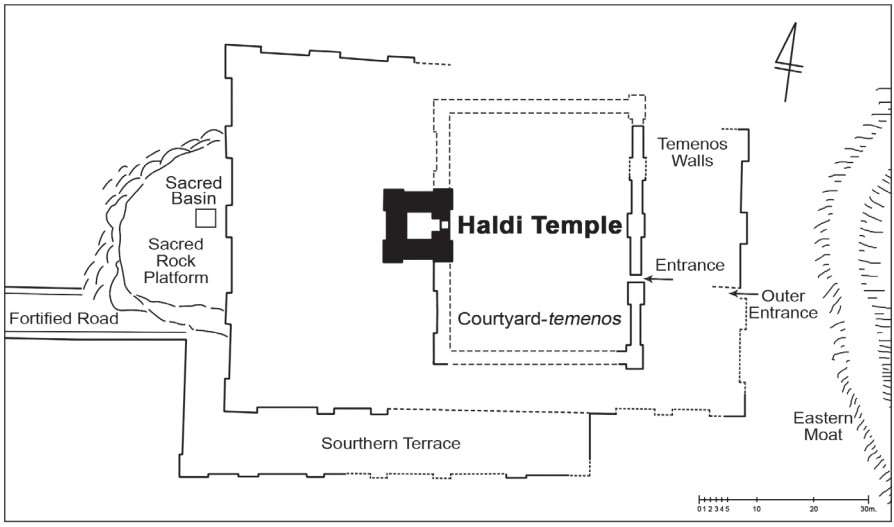

Fig. 11. Plan of the Upper Fortress (adapted by author from Erzen 1977a, fig. 8).

As mentioned before, this fortress is reached via the fortified road (Figs. 8.6, 11). The road is 14.2 m long. Its strong and thick walls measure approximately 2 m. With this fortification system, the road is protected to the north and the south and extends to the south-west end of the sacred rock platform and then reaches the southern terrace of the fortress. The road is around 6 m wide, built on compressed fine gravel filling and covered with flagstones.[57] Extending to the Upper Fortress, it was built at the same time as the Upper and Lower fortresses, in the 8th century BC, and was fortified later in the 7th century BC with thick stone walls built for defensive purposes.

The sacred rock platform (Figs. 2–3, 7, 8.7, 11) is approximately 35 × 20 m in size in the north–south and east–west directions. Most of the eastern side was hewn out of bedrock in the form of curtain and bastion; it constitutes the lower section of the fortification wall bordering the Upper Fortress to the west. This hewn section hewn is between 5 m and 6 m high. Erzen rightly finds it interesting that no such rock platform was found in any of the other Urartian fortresses.[58]

When starting excavations in 1961, this place was a priority for Erzen: it resembled the sacred 'Mother and Daughter' in Tushpa. When his excavations here ended, he stated that his research had proved him right. The ramps of the platform served as an 'observation point' to oversee the roads passing by the north and south of the plain; hence it had a strategic importance.[59] Stating that the platform was an observation point is a redundancy: from above the high fortification walls of the Upper Fortress, the alure and dentils all surroundings could be observed at all times and whenever needed. In my chapter on Tushpa/Van Citadel (below), I argue that identifying 'Mother and Daughter' as an open-air sacred area and the specific open-air ascription to the place are incorrect.

Altan Çilingiroğlu is also of the opinion that the platform was a sacred area where religious ceremonies were conducted.[60]

On the platform, a large and deep basin hewn into bedrock draws attention (Fig. 11): it must have been filled with holy water for symbolic purification. The closest similar example is found in the private area of the Irmushini temple; the basin used for this purpose was placed just to the left of the Pillared Hall entrance. The precondition for entering the *temenos* area in the Upper Fortress and for visiting the temple was to be purified. Undoubtedly, only very

[57] Erzen 1972a, 67; 1974, 547; 1977a, 9, fig. 8 plan, pls. 2, 3.1; 1978a, 57; 1978b, 537; 1979a, 2, pl. 2.1; 1979b, 256, pls. 155.10, 156.15; 1988, 2, figs. 4, 7, 22, pls. 5a–b.

[58] Erzen 1977a, 2, pls. 1.3, 2, 3.1; 1979a, 1, pl. 1.1; 1982, 89.

[59] Erzen 1977a, 2; 1979a, 2 and n. 1; 1982, 89.

[60] Çilingiroğlu 1998, 231, 233–34; 2011a, 196.

important, selected people – the king coming first – were allowed as visitors. The perfect find that settles this matter is the 2.00 m-long brick basin at the entrance of the Rusahinili Eiduru-kai (Ayanis Fortress) temple area.[61]

Since ancient times, purification with water – symbolic or more exhaustive – has been a religious rule to be followed prior to the act of worship in order to be clean in the presence of god. The ritual, even if conducted in different ways, is very common in various religions and belief systems.

Haldi Temple

Haldi's temple is situated, in accordance with the hierarchy, approximately 30 m higher than the Irmushini's: at the summit of the Upper Fortress. It was excavated in 1976 (Figs. 3, 7, 8.8, 11–15).[62]

In the building inscription of the Irmushini temple, Sarduri II says 'I had a temple built for God Haldi', and later 'for God Irmushini'. The dimensions of the temple are 12.50 × 12.50 m, whereas those of the cella are 4.50 × 4.50 m. It is a magnificent square-planned tower-temple whose walls are 3.50 m thick (Fig. 12.1–4). However, especially in the Middle Ages, the temple was heavily damaged and repaired (Figs. 12.6, 13). The basalt blocks covering the façade were discovered in the form of hundreds of large and small pieces. The three-stepped frame discovered in the remains of the northern fortification wall would have belonged to the corner of the façade entrance; however, its surface is not polished. It is inferred that the ground of the cella was paved with sedimentary limestone blocks that were 0.60 × 0.35 (× 0.15 m thick). Paving blocks were placed on compressed soil (Fig. 12.5). Larger but similar types of paving blocks can be seen in the courtyard of the Irmushini temple.

The masonry that forms the foundation of the temple walls is built from five courses of well-finished limestone blocks. The wall remained intact up to the level where thin sandstone beams connect the stone courses with the mud-brick.[63] For this reason, the bonding system and the height of the walls can be seen clearly. With the collapse of the mud-brick walls, the blue fresco pieces spreading out in a wide area reflect the traditional colour of the walls of the cella.[64]

[61] Çilingiroğlu 2011a, 197; 2011b, 350.
[62] Tarhan 2004d, 81.
[63] For sandstone beam blocks, see Tarhan 1975, 45; *cf*. Çilingiroğlu 1983, 36.
[64] Erzen 1977a, 8–10, pls. 5.1–3, 7.1–2, 8.1–2, 9.1–2; 1979a, 4, pls. 2.2–3, 4.3; 1982, 9; 1985, 197, pl. 2.1; 1987, 306.

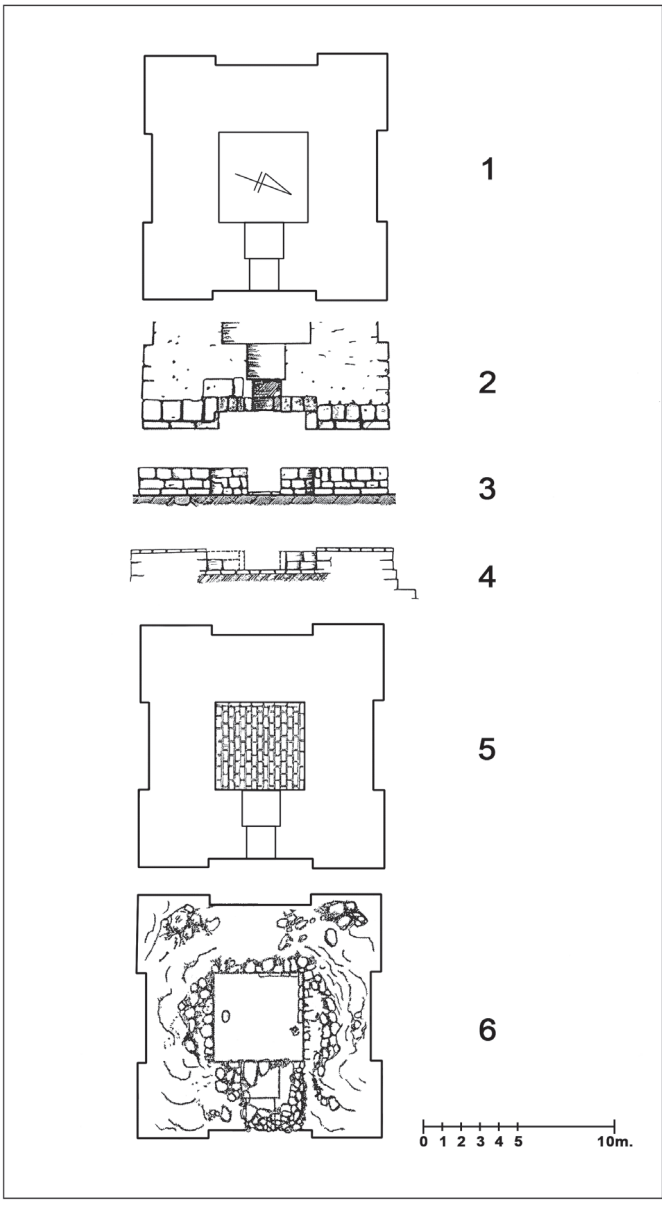

Fig. 12. (1) Plan of the Haldi temple, (2) Situation plan of entrance and cella, (3) Façade from the east, (4) Inner view of the cella and the entrance, from the west, at the north–south section, (5) Original view of the cella ground in the Urartian period, (6) Situation plan and modifications in the Middle Ages (adapted from Erzen 1977a, figs. 9–12; new representation by author).

Fig. 13. Haldi temple, from the east (author's archive).

The walls of the temple must have been around 15 m thick. Hence, it is defined as a tower-temple.[65] As seen in all excavations, the high and wide humps resulting from the fall of mud-brick walls are definite pieces of evidence. Aside from the thick walls, the wide projections provide stability for the mud-brick masonry.[66]

The architectural appearance of the top of the temple, on the other hand, crowns the building while also highlighting and intensifying its magnificence. The bastions and the thick groundworks of the walls in between form an outward protrusion resembling a surrounding balcony. Dentils rise along the edges. Several Urartian and Assyrian works that reflect this architectural tradition: such as the tower model on Toprakkale bronze plate, the fortress, city gates, fortification walls and towers on some metal belts, tower-temples on several stamp seals, and the 'temple' on the stone pylon relief found in Adilcevaz/Kef Kalesi. Aside from these, some other such examples are the

[65] For detailed information and publications on these temples, see Tarhan and Sevin 1975, 390, 401–02, n. 1.

[66] Tarhan 1975, 46; *cf.* Çilingiroğlu 1983, 35.

Urartian fortresses depicted in bronze reliefs on the well-known Balawat Gate of the Assyrian king Salmanassar III (859–821 BC) and the famous Khorsabad-Dur Sharrukin reliefs depicting the looting and destruction of the Musasir Haldi temple by Sargon II (721–705 BC) (Fig. 15).[67]

We know that the surfaces of the outer walls, except for the ashlar, were plastered with a thick (0.02–0.03 m) layer of straw. The straw-in-mud mortar prevented the plaster from cracking and falling off. In the construction of temple façades and fortification walls, margin was left for plaster, and the sandstone beams on the stone body were placed behind so as to allow for plastering. The surface of the plaster was painted with thick, white paint made from lime. The plaster and paint layers on top of one another reveal that the plaster and paint were renewed from time to time because of the heavy seasonal conditions.[68] This chalk white appearance is without doubt very striking.

The façade of the temple enhances this impressive architecture. The part that is decorated with sacred volcanic stones is in a mysterious contrast with the glittering white walls. The gate in the middle, with the power of the unknown and the divine world behind it, is indeed a mystery. The reason for this is that the temple entrances and temple gates are similar to sacred rock niches, both architecturally and in meaning: the dimensions are almost the same.[69] The inner frames of Yeşilalıç and Meher Kapısı sacred rock niches are 4.60 m and 3.59 m high respectively. Hence, the gate-wings should be between 4 and 5 m high, in proportion to the heights of the temples.[70]

The entrance to the temple was in ruins. Yet the bearing that supported the heavy gate-wing and enabled its opening was found *in situ*, just to the right of the space behind the threshold.[71] Therefore, in the cella the gate opened to the right. It was certainly made of durable wooden material and was fortified with metal frames and connecting parts. Bearing a sacred attribute, the wing must have been built as a work of art. It should be assumed that it was either decorated with engravings which added to the opulence of the outer façade or was covered with metal relief plates. The geometrical ornaments on the wooden gate depicted on a bronze plate unearthed in Toprakkale is a fine example.[72]

[67] For related publications, see Tarhan 1975, 46, 54, nos. 111–12; Merhav 1991a, 302, figs. 1–4, 306. no. 1, 30, nos. 3–4; Calmeyer 1991, 315, 319, fig. 8. For the Khorsabad relief, see also Salvini 1991, 10–13, fig. 4a–c.

[68] Tarhan 1975, 46.

[69] Tarhan and Sevin 1975, 390–96, 401–08 and 391, 396, 402, 408 comparative dimension tables, figs. 1, 8, 11–12.

[70] Tarhan and Sevin 1975, 398, 410, figs. 6–7; Sevin and Belli 1977, 369, 382, pl. 5.1–4.

[71] Erzen (1981, 24) is also of the same view and affirms the correctness of our opinion.

[72] For this system and temple gates, see Tarhan and Sevin 1975, 391, 394, 403–04, 406, figs 2–5. For bronze plate, see Barnett 1972, 178, fig. 18.

During the ritual, the gate opens slowly and the god Haldi appears; the epiphany has occurred. This is the climax of the ritual. These rituals had to begin at dawn as this is the most appropriate time for casting light onto the cella and the statue of the god. In addition, dawn is a time of the day which has carried very beautiful meanings throughout the history of mankind and is, in a way, sacred. Except for Hittite temples, a dark cella reflects a sentiment of secrecy in ancient times. The blue walls of the cella are the brightening sky. The blue paint is made from a material called Egyptian Blue.[73] We know that the statue was set on a stone pedestal situated against the western wall of the cella.[74] Unfortunately, no remains could be discovered at the temple or in the surrounding area since cult statues were broken and destroyed, being the very first targets of attack, or were taken away as 'hostages' to be displayed in foreign capitals. This was seen in some Assyrian attacks.

We do not know how and where the rituals started and in what order the ceremonies took place. The preparations must have begun before dawn. The king and the members of the royal household, dressed in their special ceremonial attire, and also (in my opinion) the governor, generals of high rank and the elite attended the rituals along with the priests and priestesses. Undoubtedly, the governor attended the rituals taking place at the two temples in Çavuştepe on behalf of the king, representing him in every matter. In the stamp seals unearthed in Toprakkale, Karmir-Blur and Bastam, the king is depicted as heading towards the ceremony ground under an umbrella held by an officer behind him.[75] After the sacrifice ceremony, cooked or raw meat was offered to the god. The prayers and the sacrificial offerings were to gratify the god and the god would then realise the wishes of those who attended the ceremony. At the end of the ceremony, the gate would close slowly and stay closed until another sacrificial offering. And the god would continue his mysterious life in his unknown world in the dark cella.[76]

The 'epiphany' occurred at the temples whenever needed and desired. It took place in a three-stepped frame that enclosed the entrance and the statue of god. Hence, that frame was also sacred. It is known that the 'sacred frame' belief and tradition dates back to 1000 BC – maybe even earlier – in Hasanlu in north-western Iran and also in several other capitals. This tradition observed in religious and important structures was later applied for a long time in stone architecture as an ornamental element.[77]

[73] See Çilingiroğlu 2011b, 346.
[74] Tarhan and Sevin 1975, 397, 409.
[75] Çilingiroğlu 1998, 230; Calmeyer 1991, 317, fig. 6.
[76] Tarhan and Sevin 1975, 395, 407; Çilingiroğlu 1998, 230–33.
[77] Tarhan and Sevin 1975, 396, 409.

However, in sacred rock niches the epiphany was never realised visually. Prayers were said, sacrifices were made and grand religious ceremonies were conducted. The belief that god would appear from the Sacred Gate was the fundamental element of the ritual. This belief has continued until today in the Christian and Muslim societies of the region.[78]

There are no traces or remains of either the spears on stone pedestals that should be found at both sides of the temple entrance or the two shields that should be hanging on the façade wall, the two cauldrons that should be in front of the temple and the altars, the inseparable elements of the courtyard, the *temenos*. These were permanent fixtures that must be found in the cult area of the temple. Votive cult objects such as spears, shields and cauldrons, as well as altars used for sacrifices or libation were cult elements bearing sacred attributes (Fig. 14). The metal objects, along with other bronze, copper and iron

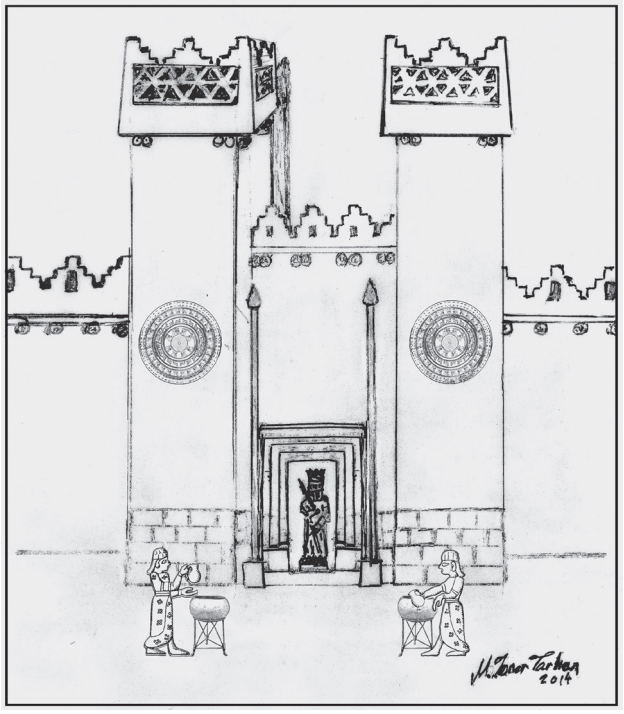

Fig. 14. Reconstruction of the Haldi temple (author).

[78] For detailed information, see Tarhan and Sevin 1975, 395–98, 407–10; Sevin and Belli 1977, 370, 374–75, 381–85; Çilingiroğlu 1998, 231, 234–35, 237; 2011a, 192–95, fig. 1; Salvini 2006, 155–59, 286, fig. 6; 2011, 86, fig. 5a–b.

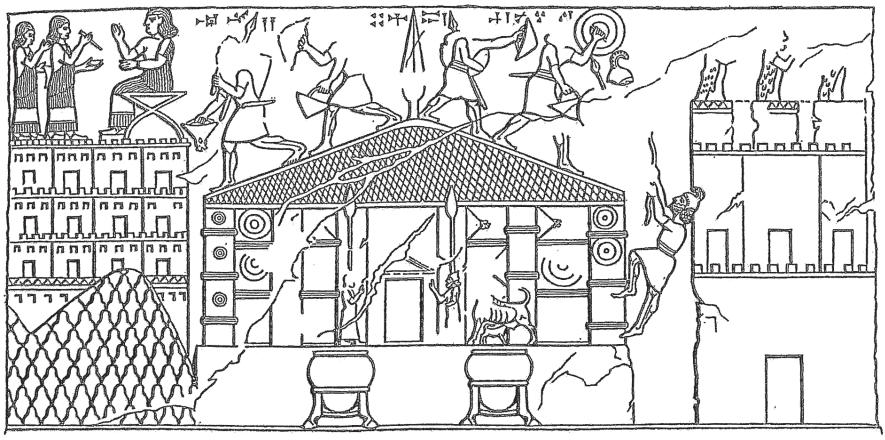

Fig. 15. Plundering of the Haldi temple at Musasir, by Assyrians in 714 BC. From the relief in palace of Sargon II (721–705 BC) at Khorsabad (after P.E. Botta and E. Flandin, *Monuments de Ninive*, vol. 2 [Paris 1849], pl. 141).

artefacts and objects, were collected in the Upper and Lower fortresses during the Achaemenid period – not in the lootings in Scythian attacks – and converted into ingots by smelting in the metal workshops, losing their original form.

The Scythians, labelled 'ghost archers' in the ancient world, moved very quickly and with agility during their attacks and after the looting withdrew very fast. Thus, they preferred to take away only small and precious objects made of gold or silver and the supplies they needed.

Temenos, Fortification Walls, Southern Terrace

The temple courtyard (*temenos*) is enclosed by an impressive wall (Figs. 8.9–10, 11). This sacred area is 42.50 × 28.50 m in extent. It is covered with neatly placed limestone blocks whose façade dimensions are generally 0.75 × 0.95 m or 0.75 × 0.85 m; although most have the same height, some that are over 1.00 m high. The symmetrical support projections found on the inner and outer faces of the 1.75 m-thick wall provide support to the wall while also enlivening it. This is a unique example of unfilled stone wall masonry technique. Projections are 3.50 m thick. The *temenos* wall is 2.25 m high with three courses of stones. The upper layers are of sun-dried mud-brick.

The narrow gate passage (1.10 m wide and 3.10 m long) that allows entry into the sacred *temenos* area is situated on the eastern wall. It is a three-coursed wall similar to the *temenos* wall. However, the entrance of the passage is 1.23 m

lower than the courtyard ground level. A ramp with an approximately 30° gradient eliminates this. There is another pass on the same level, situated in the eastern fortification wall of the fortress, allowing for entry to and exit from the Eastern Moat. Like the other one, it is 1.10 m wide.[79] Without doubt the gate-wings of the passages were built from strong and durable materials.

I would like to stress that this passage had a very critical strategic importance in providing a means of escape from the fortress to the steep peaks of the mountain whenever needed.

In the construction of the courtyard, the bedrock was flattened, the holes in sloping sections were filled with bits and pieces of stone blocks and later paved with a thin layer of fine gravel to attain a smooth surface. Finally, flat and large limestone flagstones were neatly laid on top.[80]

The courtyard/*temenos* area was certainly enclosed with porticos. In my opinion, the fire layer covering almost all of the courtyard, the metal remains stuck into the ash and the intensive use of wooden construction in such buildings adequately prove the existence of a portico.

Fortification walls (Figs. 6, 11) encircle the area along which the Upper Fortress extends. The area is a ridge with an almost oval shape, in line with the topography. The southern section of the hill is flatter than the northern. Therefore, it is understood that the fortress was built to serve several important purposes: providing support to a large part of the southern fortification wall – surrounding and fortifying the southern section that is hard to defend with high terrace walls functioning as secondary fortification walls – and connecting to the Upper Fortress via the fortified road. Most probably, a portable wooden ladder was extended from an appropriate point in the northern fortification wall whenever needed, especially to allow the guards' entry to and exit from the fortress. According to the plan, the area that surrounds the temple and *temenos*, except for the narrow entrance of the *temenos*, has no connection with the 'sacred' area.[81]

The narrow passage in the eastern fortification wall opens to the Eastern Moat. The moat is approximately 160 m long and its width at the ends is around 10 m (Figs. 3, 8.11).[82] The northern fortification wall is built from five

[79] Erzen 1979a, 4, fig. 2, pls. 3.2–3, 4.1; 1981, 24; 1982, 90; 1988, 6–7. Some of the dimensions above have been corrected by us.

[80] Erzen 1979a, 3, pl. 2.3. In the 1981 excavation report it is stated that the ground is paved with 'coating sun-dried mud' (see Erzen 1983, 156, 162, fig. 2); however, there are no Urartian temple courtyards with sun-dried mud coatings.

[81] For excavations, see Erzen 1977a, 3, 9, fig. 8 plan; 1983, 158; 1984, 148, 408 figs. 1–2 (plan and relief section).

[82] Erzen 1977a, 2; 1978, 57; 1988, 2. The width given is not precise, the dimensions were measured on the topographical map. See also Lehmann-Haupt 1926, 61.

courses of stones and well-finished limestone blocks that are 3.00 m high. The bastions are 5.40 m and 5.45 m wide; the protrusion is 1.00 m.[83] The curtains are 8.25 m, 8.30 m and 8.50 m wide. In the rubble of the ruins, a basalt piece of inscription was unearthed; probably belonging to a building inscription.[84] Repairs with small stones, laid very differently from the unique stone-laying in the upper layers of the fortification wall, to defend and protect the fortress, should be dated to the period of mediaeval settlement.[85]

Scythian Invasions and Median Hegemony

The relentless Scythian attacks that resulted in the fall of the Sardurihinili/Çavuştepe Fortress and ended the Urartian period occurred in the last ten years of the 7th century BC, after 612 BC. Evidence for these attacks includes various types of arrowheads stuck in mud-brick walls or found in severe fire/damaged layers; horse-trapping fragments, bones or antlers and several objects in Steppe-Scythian Animal Style. Most striking are the skeletal remains from the atrocity found at the summit which prove the sorrowful deaths of fully equipped Urartian warriors, wearing helmets and armour, trying to defend the fortress.[86] After the Scythian invasions, the fortress, along with others, fell under Median hegemony between 605 BC and 590 BC. The evidence for Median hegemony can be seen especially in Tushpa.[87] The Median grave and grave-goods in the mound of Van Citadel are the most striking examples.

From the beginning of the 6th century BC, we may infer that Çavuştepe Fortress was no longer a military base and abandoned totally. Nevertheless, local villagers built simple houses for themselves in the ruins of the fortress and continued to settle there for a little longer.

One of these houses is adjacent to the northern wall of the bastion in the north-east corner of Uç Kale. Instead of building a separate wall here, the bastion wall was used. The house is in almost square form with dimensions of 9.00 × 8.50 m. The adjoining apse in the north-east of the house is noteworthy. It is large and neat; covering an area almost half that of the house; it is one of the features of such houses. This type of house can be seen in Anatolia starting from the Early Bronze Age: walled houses with two rooms and forecourt, some without an

[83] Erzen 1982, 89; 1983, 156, 162, fig. 1; 1984, 147, pls. 403.1–3; 1985, 202, pl. 1.1–2; 1987, 305, 310–13, figs. 1–8.

[84] Erzen 1983, 158, 162 fig. 4.

[85] Erzen 1987, 306, 314, fig. 9.

[86] Erzen 1979b, 259, pl. 158.19–20. For detailed information and Scythian finds in the Uç Kale front buildings, see Erzen 1988, 45–50, figs. 39–41, pls. 45a–c, 46a–c, 47a–e.

[87] Erzen 1979b, 260; 1988, 52–54.

apse. They are seen for centuries in a wide area of Urartian-ruled territory, and they have been unearthed and examined in Norgüh near Çavuştepe and also in Ağaçlık/Avzini in the Van region.

The settlement, dating to the end of the 7th and beginning of the 6th century BC, was on the thick fire layer in front of Uç Kale. It housed local village people who had survived the Scythian invasion and depredations. The foundations of the houses, on average, 0.40–0.50 m thick, were built from stones found in the surrounding area and with uneven, odd or even coursed stones. The ground is compressed sun-dried mud. Simple tandoors and ovens with diameters varying from 0.65 m to 0.50 m have been unearthed. Most ovens are made from the bottom parts of large pithoi found at the fortress. Hand-made pottery and spindles of unbaked clay are further evidence of poverty. There is an open courtyard in front of almost every house and the ground is paved with fine flagstones. On the other hand, the house is one of the simplest and the poorest. Above the sun-dried mud ground of the house lies a very simple oven. The bronze arrows and spearheads found on the ground suggest that this poor village, the last Urartian-period village settlement, was burnt down and destroyed by the Medians. Burials in the mediaeval cemetery situated in front of Uç Kale have damaged these poor architectural remains. Distant from the cemetery, the house we mention could have avoided the devastation somewhat.[88]

Achaemenid Period

The Achaemenid period begins from the 6th century BC. Its architectural remains are above the layer of devastation caused by the Scythians and Medians and the fire layer. The corridor that runs along the northern wall of the Haldi temple, parallel to the structure, is 1.40 m wide. Coating stones are paved either on the levelled bed rock or on a thick sun-dried mud block. It was certainly built as a passage to the metal-processing workshop, whose entrance in the eastern wall is connected to it. The magnificent structure built adjacent to the western wall of the temple is in contrast with the plain architecture of the workshop. Erzen defines it as the Apadana. Well-finished, stepped, almost square andesite pedestals draw our attention.[89]

In the structure, which extends towards the terrace in the west, is a line of pedestals of the wooden columns or pillars that carry the ceiling. Looking at the line in the northern section, the structure should be 21.00 m long.[90] We

[88] Erzen 1968, 413; 1979b, 261; 1981, 25; 1988, 51–54, figs. 43–47, pls. 17a, 19d, 49a–e, 50a–e.
[89] Erzen 1981, 23; 1985, 198, 204 pl. 3.2–3, 205, pl. 4.1; 1987, 306, 317 fig. 14.
[90] See Erzen 1985, 198; 1987, 317: definition of ‘pillared halls’ can be seen in plan in fig. 14.

lack definite knowledge regarding its width but, in my opinion, it has the same width as the temple wall, hence it is 12.50 m wide. It must have been built for the Iranian officers managing and controlling the workshop. A narrower gate passage opens to the adjacent workshop in the north (Fig. 16.10).

The workshop (Fig. 16) is the most significant structure of this period. The ceramic fragments found in this area are among the evidence that the workshop was built by the Achaemenids. [91]

Following the fall of Urartu as a result of Scythian invasions, the great mining industry of Anatolia and the ancient Near East began to deteriorate. The famous metal-processing workshops of eastern Anatolia were destroyed and a severe decline in both mining and the production of metal objects ensued. It is critical to keep in mind that some Urartian roads and fortresses were directly related to the production sources, i.e. the mines.[92]

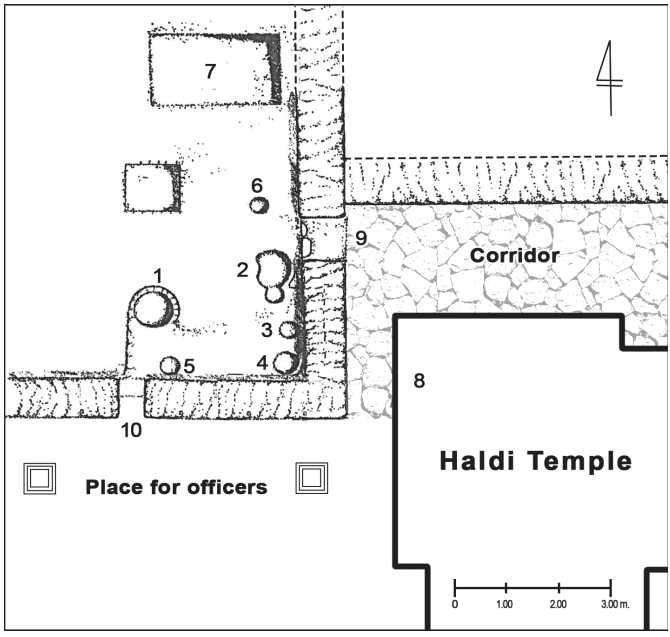

Fig. 16. Plan of the metal workshop: (1–6) Smelting furnaces, (7) Pit for ash and coal wastes, (8) North-west corner of the Haldi temple, (9) Entrance of the workshop, (10) Entrance for control of workers and productions (adapted from Başaran 1989, pl. 171.1; new plan by author; drawing by B. Batıkan).

[91] Sevin 1998, 716, 720, nos. 7–8, pl. 5.7–8; also see Belli 1992, 88; 2004, 49.

[92] For detailed information on mines, see Belli 1991, 14–41; for workshops, see Belli 1992, 80, 88; for Urartian mining, see Belli 2004, 39–49.

The workshop was built of mud-brick masonry (starting from the north-west corner). Looking at the current northern and western wall lengths and the waste pit in the north-eastern section, the area of the workshop would have been around 100 m^2.

Six smelting furnaces were created by carving into the mud ground of the Urartian period. Except for a large furnace whose diameter is approximately 0.80 m, the others range between 0.20 and 0.30 m. They are 0.20 m deep (Fig. 16.1–6). The ventilation channels, 0.20 m in diameter, lie below the sun-dried mud paving and provide air flow. They head northwards. The interiors of the furnaces are plastered with *mühre* (compressed mud composed of loamy soil and plant remains). They have become very hard due to the continuous hot-firing inside. For heating, stone coal was used along with charcoal as the large amount of mineral coal slag indicates. The coal was probably brought from a nearby furnace close to the Şahmanis village of Gürpınar. Pits for ash and coal waste are also found in the workshop. In one of the small furnaces, the pit is adjacent; in one other, however, it is much bigger and deep (Fig. 16.2, 7). While the furnaces were being cleaned, mineral cinder remains and parts of melting pots were discovered. [93]

As remarked above, as a result of the decline in the mining industry, metal objects, votives, weapons and other such objects were being melted. The Çavuştepe workshop is one of the few unearthed from the period.

In Çavuştepe, whatever metal objects was found in the temples, palace and fortress were gathered and used according to their purposes. First, ingots were made from them: bronze, iron, gold, silver and tin. Later, as understood from the moulding parts, thin rods/strips were made from the ingots. These, especially those of gold, silver and tin, were used in trade and economic exchange. Like the rest of the fortress, the workshop was destroyed as a result of severe fires.[94]

Mediaeval Settlement

The medieval settlement covered almost all of the area within the fortification walls. It was a dense and was extended arbitrarily as need required. The houses were built of clear-cut, massive blocks and simple rubble stones belonging to the Urartian period. The foundation and the walls, paved inelaborately with crude workmanship, were on average 1.00 m thick. Mud was used as a bonding material. There are no traces of the use of mud-brick. Ground surfaces of some

[93] Erzen 1983, 156, 162, fig. 3; Belli 1982, 81; 2004, 49; Başaran 1989, 443, pl. 171, fig. 1 plan.
[94] Belli 1992, 81; 2004, 49; Başaran 1989, 445: analysis of metal pieces and slag has also been provided.

houses were paved with flagstones. Round tandoors and furnaces and many rubbish pits are found in these places. The common feature of the tandoors was the existence of ventilation holes made with flagstones; similar examples can be seen in mediaeval settlements in Taht-ı Suleyman.[95]

The cella was used as a room; however, it was certainly exclusive. The entrance is closed with a masonry wall of rubble stones and large limestone blocks dating back to the Urartian period. The thickness of the wall is 1.00 m (Fig. 12.6). There is no entrance, it must have been on the roof. Compared with other houses, the walls are neatly plastered and overpainted with lime. The ground of the house is compressed soil. A tandoor and furnace are found. The socket in the *in-situ* block stone was probably used as a mortar stone.[96] In my opinion, this privileged site belonged to the leader of the village. The buildings reflect the society, a poor and simple village culture. The mediaeval cemetery situated in front of Uç Kale also belonged to the locals of this settlement as there is no burial ground in the Upper Fortress. The graves were discovered 0.20–1.30 m below ground level. More than 50 burials were found. Most of these were simple soil graves. In the remaining few, fine flagstones were placed vertically on the sides of the grave. A simple chest tomb was built. The dead were buried with their heads facing west and their feet facing east, face upwards or looking south. Both arms are stretched straight horizontally. Infant burials are very few. There are no tomb stones on any of the graves. According to Erzen, since no religious symbols such as the cross can be seen in either the village settlement in the Upper Fortress or in these graves, these cannot be Christian burials.[97] Many pieces of glazed pottery help to date the mediaeval settlement. Mostly, green and yellow sgraffiti are seen. Similar pottery found in settlements or layers in Turkey and north-western Iran has been dated to 12th–14th centuries. The settlement in Çavuştepe must have been of similar date.[98] And since the glazed fragments found in the Upper Fortress resemble Turkish-era pottery in Taht-ı Suleyman, Erzen states the existence of a Turkish settlement here in the 13th century.[99]

It is understood that the mediaeval settlement was destroyed by severe fire. Metal pieces were converted to cinder and the traces of fire can be seen in some ceramic fragments. The rubble and debris in the fire layer found just beneath the current surface is approximately 1.00 m thick. There was no later settlement at the fortress.[100]

[95] Erzen 1977a, 3–4, pl. 4.1–4, fig. 4; 1981, 25.
[96] Erzen 1977a, 4, pl. 5.1–2, 10, fig. 9 plan, pl. 5.3.
[97] Erzen 1975, 558; 1976, 710; 1977a, 3. For burials, see Erzen 1988, 55, pls. 51a–b, 52a–c.
[98] Erzen 1977a, 5–7, figs. 5–6, pl. 6; 1981, 25; 1985, 198; pieces of glassware: Erzen 1987, 307.
[99] Erzen 1977a, 5–7, figs. 5–6, pl. 6; 1988, 1, n. 3.
[100] Erzen 1977a, 3; 1985, 198; 1987, 307.

Lower Fortress

The Lower Fortress is much larger than the Upper and is situated to its west. It covers an area of approximately 430 × 70 m on a hill stretching in an east–west direction (Fig. 17). Located 90 m higher than the plain, the fortress does not have a straight and flat plan and is enclosed with a strong fortification system. A long and wide area was created by exploiting the natural form of the massive rock structure on which it stands. In addition to its defensive function, the surrounding fortification wall functioned as a strong buttress wall for the infilling. There is also a very advanced terracing system aimed to gain space. On these terraces, buildings connected with the main structures were constructed. While the foundations of the fortification walls were being hewn, the requisite canal systems were also cut into the bedrock; in other words, everything had been planned beforehand. It is noteworthy that the clean water canals and sewerage system were built to prevent the filling and especially the mud-brick walls from being adversely affected by damp and the rainwater and snow accumulating and draining on the surface above. The channels through which sacrificial blood was drained, on the other hand, were unique.[101]

The masonry of the fortification walls and the terrace fillings varies with respect to the nature and use of the various structures. For instance, the Irmushini temple, courtyard and its annexes stretch across a very wide area. The northern section is one of the steepest hillsides of the fortress. The strong fortification wall here supports the northern part of the *temenos* area. Bastion projections are 1.00 m long and 4.40 m wide; whereas the dimensions of the curtains are 17.10 m and 17.70 m. The well-finished limestone blocks measure 1.20 × 0.60 × 0.60 m. In some bastions they are in cubic form (0.65 × 0.68 m), whilst in curtains their dimensions are 0.60 × 1.00 m. The frontal stone course is 6.00 m high. The filling behind is built from large cyclopean stones. The masonry stretches towards the west in a descending and then ascending form as a result of the formation of the rock mass; the number of stone courses increases and decreases accordingly. The courses were built up in a draw-back order.[102] With this technique, the aim was to alleviate the vertical pressure caused by the weights of the structures above and the vertical and horizontal pressure caused by the filling. Hence, the fortification walls were prevented from falling down due to such pressure, especially during severe earthquakes. The fact that some of the fortification walls were supported with strong and wide buttress walls reveals that precautionary measures against such dangers were taken from time to time. The system built for draining sacrificial blood

[101] Erzen 1969, 407; 1970, 501; 1971, 337; 1988, 8, 7, pl. B/a.
[102] Erzen 1969, 411; 1970, 499–501.

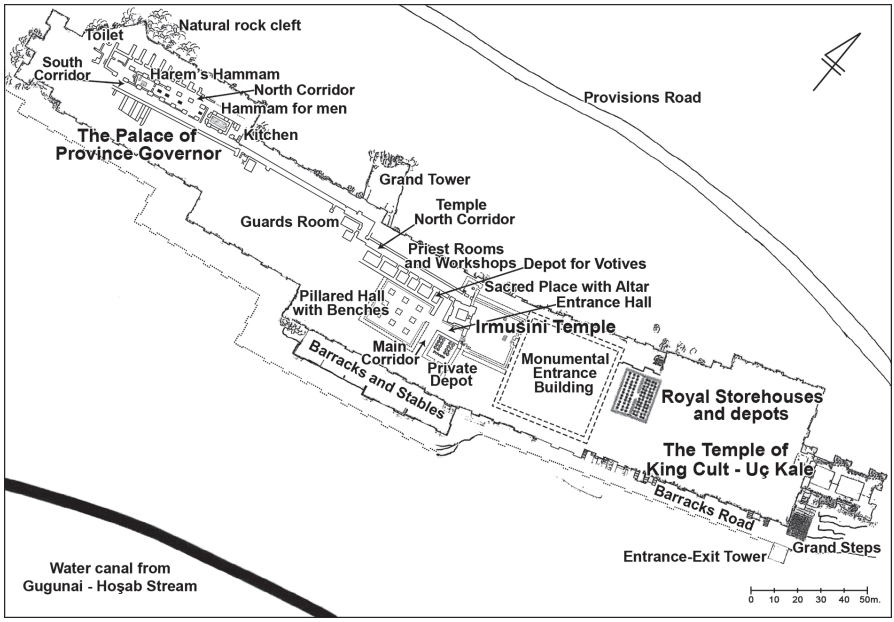

Fig. 17. Plan of the Lower Fortress (adapted from Erzen 1978a, pl. 23.1; new plan in detail by author; drawing by B. Batıkan).

flowing out of the round stone altar in the courtyard is admirable: blood flowing through the fortification walls via meticulously built stone gutters that were on average 1 m long. This reflects the belief that the fortification was under the protection of the god and was strengthened by the power of god. The northern hillside was also under his protection.[103] The U-shaped blocks with vertical edges were plastered with bitumen at the bonding points to prevent blood from seeping out. The surfaces were paved with flagstones. A dry wall was put up in front of the vertical blocks beneath the altar pedestal.

The vividness of the northern fortification wall, the aesthetics of the masonry with various sizes of stones, the chalk white lime paint of the mud-brick wall, the elegance of the dentils and the statuesque appearance of the high fortification walls must have been very impressive.[104] The northern walls between Uç Kale and the *temenos* area twist and bend; their harmony with the topography is bewildering.[105]

[103] Erzen 1969, 407–09; 1970, 501.
[104] Erzen 1970, 500; Tarhan 2004a, 83.
[105] Erzen 1971, 335.

The Grand Tower, adjacent to the northern wall and facing north-west, is the most attractive structure of the fortification (Figs. 8.20, 17). It is situated between the north-west corner of the temple area and the eastern side of the northern corridor of the Provincial Palace. It is connected to the palace; hence, it is called the 'King's Tower'.[106]

It is possible to determine the dimensions of the tower: the short western wall extending towards the north is approximately 30 m long whereas the eastern wall is longer. The width of the structure is more than 16 m. It is assumed that it was added to the wall later. Wooden remains that were 0.25 m thick were found in the fortress. The longest of the remains measured 4.00 m. These were probably the remains of the wooden beams of the floors in the tower, either of the elements bearing the ground or of the stairs. It can be inferred from the remains of the mud-brick walls that the lower floor was divided into small rooms. The ground of these was paved with sun-dried mud blocks placed on stone blocks. A limestone block (1.10 × 1.00 m), understood to be a toilet stone, invites attention. However, it is larger than the toilet stone found in the palace.

The widths and lengths of the stepped rock foundations rising up the steep hillside show how strong and tall the structure was. The *in-situ* well-finished limestone blocks laid on rock foundations whose widest surface is longer than 1.00 m, although small in number and found only at a few different places, provide some hints about the masonry. In addition, they demonstrate the high skills of the Urartians in terms of foundation techniques. Lehmann-Haupt's 'Irrationalen Felsenstrepper-Göttertreppen' view has been invalidated by definite *in-situ* evidence.[107]

In addition to its defensive role, the tower controls the road to the north. This road, highly important for the fortress, extends from the end of the eastern slope towards the west, until it reaches the entrance of the natural rock cleft, called the 'potern' (see below). This and the water source below the entrance are of critical importance (Figs. 8.18–19, 17).

The fortification stretches towards the palace. The wall standing in the north of the palace area extends towards the west with a similar impressive appearance. With its strong walls, the fortification supports the long and wide terrace on the north corridor along which lie the magazines and the filling below the terrace. That is to say: it is a very strong retaining wall stretching from one end to the other. The surfaces of the large limestone blocks are covered with

[106] Erzen 1969, 411; 1970, 501.

[107] Erzen 1964, 569; 1969, 410; 1970, 501; 1973, 440; 1983, 161; see also Lehmann-Haupt 1926, 163 and fig. on that page.

flat stones. A drainage system, with connection to the kitchen, has been discovered in the terrace filling: dirty water from the kitchen drains out underneath the fortification wall through a channel hewn into bedrock.[108]

The channel belonging to the toilet in the west of the palace proves how much importance was given to hygiene and health. The excrement passed out of the fortification walls through a channel hewn into bedrock. The channel then heads northwards and westwards via two open channels, both 0.40 m deep, one 1.60 m long, the other 3.20 m. The excrement was taken as far away as possible.[109] The terrace was also an alure surrounded with dentils. We had seen these multi-purpose constructions in the northern walls of the temple.

The wall extending from King's Tower to the northern section of the Provincial Palace area – and this area, heading towards the north at a vertical angle, widens in this direction – is an example of a grand fortification built in line with classical Çavustepe architecture. Its course snakes to match the formation of the bedrock. It protects the terrace, which is also an alure, situated to the north of the corridor that connects the temple and the Provincial Palace. When the mud-brick wall collapsed, the walls of the corridor collapsed too. This debris to the north is spread over a wide area. In it, red- and yellow-coloured frescos are found on mud-brick fragments of the corridor walls. These provide a hint, albeit limited, about the wall decorations in the corridor. This debris is rich in small finds such as bone amulets. Among the arrows and bowheads, Scythian arrowheads, in particular, draw attention.[110]

Before reaching the west side, the northern wall of the palace makes a wide angle and heads towards the north-west. Then, at the fortified corner with bastion, it heads towards the south at a right angle. Its extension meets the fortification wall in the western section of the fortress. The western side of the fortress is the weakest in terms of defence. The two large corner towers with a third tower built in between aimed to strengthen this section. In the Urartian fortification system – except for the Minua period – towers were uncommon. However, they were built in conditions where it was absolutely necessary, as was the case in the building of the King's Tower. In addition, this section is surrounded by a second wall to the north-west (Figs. 3, 8, 17). The fortification system created by the second wall on the north-western hillside is connected with the 'potern' and protects the surrounding area. The bastions built close to one another and the tall towers enabled very effective archery. A large number

[108] Erzen 1971, 337.
[109] Erzen 1968, 417.
[110] Erzen 1969, 411; 1971, 338; 1972b, 429.

of arrowheads were found in front of the towers and the second fortification wall, among them we should note the Scythian arrowheads.[111]

The wide and long natural rock cleft situated on the north-western steep hillside of the rock mass is referred to as the 'potern' (Figs. 3, 8.18, 17).[112] The entrance faces north-east. The upper section was certainly surrounded on three sides by a wide, high and strong stone wall, confirmed by foundation on the bedrock. Well-finished rock steps, high and wide, were hewn into the sloped ground of the pass. Down these steps, an exit area stretching towards the plain is reached. Use of the 'potern' during an attack or a siege to outflank the enemy from behind must have been impracticable: how would a large number of soldiers descend it? Moreover, it was very visible.

As we mentioned above, the boiling spring water at the left of the entrance, just at the foot of the hillside at plain level draws the attention. This spring was the only source of water at the foot of the fortress. In addition, the road, which follows the eastern-sloped road and the hillside and then reaches the entrance of the natural cleft, demonstrates the use of the pass. In my opinion, the critically important food and water supplies were pulled up by a winding wheel on a wooden platform built on the tower. It is acknowledged that the Urartians had the ability to make a wooden load-carrying palette that could be pulled up with a thick rope attached to chains or ropes at its four corners. Such a mechanism must have been set up as the fortress lacked an entrance gate. It is certain that the high tower that was situated on the south-east of the fortress and controlled entrance and exit also had the same system.

The cleft, had a connection to the palace. It is understood that food, water and other supplies were carried to the storerooms at the palace and the temple and to the main storehouse and other depots via alures on the terraces.

The inside of the pass is covered with a thick debris, destruction and fire layers. In this debris and close to the steps, a mixed pile of hundreds of crushed corpses of those massacred during the Scythian invasions has been unearthed. Finds such as hairgrips, fibulae, silver and bronze rings, bracelets and sewing needles indicate that women and girls had also been killed. It is evident that the corpses of soldiers defending the fortress were thrown away here, together with their armour. The large number of bronze helmet pieces and scale armour plates, belt and pectoral fragments, also parts of quivers ornamented with relief, various arrow- and bow-heads made from bronze and iron, pieces of swords and daggers found in the area demonstrate the terrifying face of war. The bodies thrown into the kitchen and belonging to those who were evidently

[111] Erzen 1968, 418; 1969, 412. For the towers, see Çilingiroğlu 1983, 32–35.
[112] Erzen 1966, 507; 1974, 548; 1977b, 621; 1978b, 539.

not soldiers reveal yet another brutality: an adult body leaning against the dump with hands covering his face reveals in how much pain he died.[113]

The western section of the Lower Fortress was the weakest and the most critical area in terms of defence: the rock mass descends too gently towards the plain hereabouts. Hence the erection of a second surrounding fortification wall that extends towards the east, along the southern fortification wall of the fortress, in parallel with the main fortification system. The barracks and barns were situated in the long wide area in between.

On the western side of the fortress, approximately 30 m from the second fortification wall, a deep rock moat borders the Lower Fortress to the west, as was the case in the Upper Fortress. The length of the Western Moat exceeds 200 m. The widest section is around 20 m whereas the width at the ends is approximately 2 m (Figs. 3, 8.16).[114]

Irmushini Temple

This is situated in the middle section of the fortress and covers a large area with the annexes (Figs. 8.12, 18, 24). Irmushini is the nineteenth god in rank at Meher Kapısı, and it was ordered that one bull and two sheep be sacrificed to him.[115] He is assumed to be the local god of the fertile Gürpınar plain and its surrounding area as there is no temple built for him in any other Urartian fortress or settlement and is presumed to be the god of reproduction and fertility. The phallus-shaped, double-horned, ochre-dyed votive statuette of the god made from clay seems to be confirming this presumption. It is indeed very interesting that in Sardurihinili, the two gods – Haldi and Irmushini – were sanctified together.[116]

On the building inscription found on the façade of the temple, to the left of the entrance, Sarduri II states:

> Nothing had been built here before. When I rose to the throne, I had a temple built here for the God Haldi and I had a susi built for the God Irmushini. I had a canal opened from the Gugunai Stream, making the soil fertile. I established fields, gardens, orchards and vine-yards. I built a new city, Sardurihinili… (Figs. 19–20).[117]

[113] Erzen 1966, 507; 1972b, 430; 1974, 548; 1977b, 621; 1978b, 539. For the man who died in pain, see Erzen 1988, 49, pl. 47e.

[114] Erzen 1969, 411; 1988, 2. The width given here is not precise. The dimensions were measured on the topographical map.

[115] Erzen 1988, 8–9; Tarhan 2004a, 81; König 1955–57, no. 10; *UKN* 27; Payne 2006, no. 3.2.1.

[116] Erzen 1969, 410; Tarhan 2004a, 81.

[117] Erzen 1972a, 68; Payne 2006, no. 9.3.11, figs. 111–112.

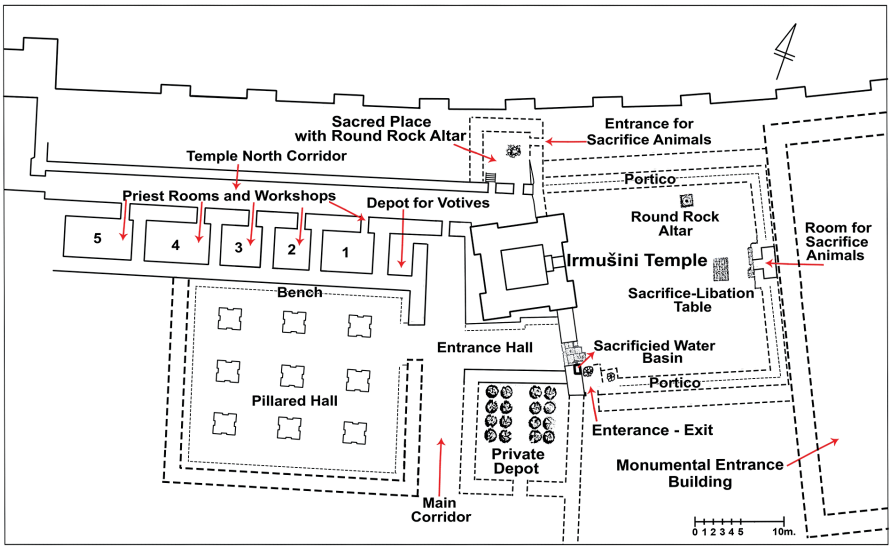

Fig. 18. Plan of the Irmushini temple and its private buildings (adapted from Erzen 1972a, fig. 4; new plan in detail by author; drawing by B. Batıkan).

Mirjo Salvini describes it thus: '… The inscription of the susi temple dedicated the local god Irmushini is a master piece of the epigraphic art…'.[118]

The inscription was written on well-finished and polished dark blue basalt blocks. As noted in the section on the Haldi temple, the masonry of temple façades was usually made from sacred volcanic stones-basalt blocks. Limestone blocks were used in the building of other walls. The inscription extends over three blocks. The third block of the inner corner of the echelon frame is non-existent, as, in consequence, is a third of the inscription. The same text was repeated on the right side of the entrance, but these blocks are absent too.[119]

It is a typical tower-temple with corner projections and thick walls. Its dimensions are 10 × 10 m, whereas the cella is 4.50 × 4.50 m. The threshold stone is made from massive basalt. In building of the foundation, the bedrock was utilised as much as possible. The ground of the cella was wholly hewn into bedrock whereas, its walls partially so. The three-coursed basalt blocks on

[118] Salvini 2011, 94.

[119] Erzen 1972a. Missing sections have been restored by Sait Başaran by using the moulding technique and with basalt coloured special mortar. See Erzen 1977b, 622, fig. 25.1; 1981, 40, 43, fig. 6.

Fig. 19. Irmushini temple and sacrifice-libation table, from the east (author's archive).

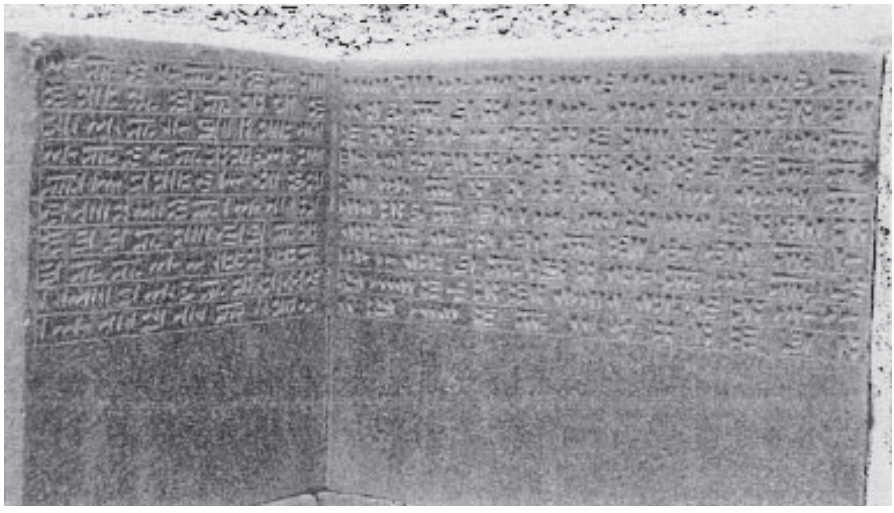

Fig. 20. Inscription of the Irmushini temple (author's archive).

the façade were placed on the bedrock foundation that was built from huge and neatly ordered limestone blocks. The height of the blocks clearly shows the thickness of the courtyard paving (Fig. 19).[120]

No remains of the cella's ground paving have been found. However, like the Haldi temple, it must have been meticulously paved with well-finished stone blocks. It is understood that the mud-brick walls of the cella were painted with traditional blue fresco paint. On the walls of the stone masonry, on the other hand, are stylised plant and geometrical patterns in various colours. But as the stone wall of the cella is covered with a thick plaster, some have swollen and come off. An ochre-dyed, thick, straight line on the stone wall was probably drawn to indicate the section that was to be plastered.[121]

The square courtyard in front of the temple is 21.50 × 21.50 m (Figs. 17–18, 21). It is surrounded on three sides (northern, eastern and southern), by a portico with wooden poles. However, the collapse of the mud-brick body of the northern fortification walls towards the north resulted in the collapse of the portico's wing. The pieces of coal and burnt plank mixed with dense ash, resulting from a severe fire and spread over a 5.00 m area on the hillside at the foot of the fortification wall, must have belonged to the wooden elements of the portico. Fresco fragments provide information about the inner decoration of the mud-brick walls of the portico. The 0.60 m-high sun-dried mud banks found underneath the portico are adjacent to the high *temenos* walls and surround the courtyard. The banks and the mud-brick wall they lean against are decorated with brightly coloured frescos. It is understood that those attending the long and mysterious ceremonies waited here from time to time or watched some of the rituals from here (the ceremonies etc. are described in the section on the Haldi temple).

The *in-situ*, well-cut, thick and big sedimentary stone blocks found at the entrance of the Pillared Hall/Sedirli Salon, in two sections of the courtyard, provide precise information about the pavement of the courtyard. Such stones are permeable. They cause the accumulating rain and melting snow water to leak down. This was an additional means of preventing particularly the mud-brick walls and the interior architectural elements such as banks and frescos from being affected adversely by damp.[122] The channelling that carried water through the paving and filler layers and out of the fortification walls has already been explained.

[120] Erzen 1965, 555; 1969, 407.
[121] Erzen 1965, 555.
[122] Erzen 1967, 470; 1968, 415; 1970, 500; 1971, 335.

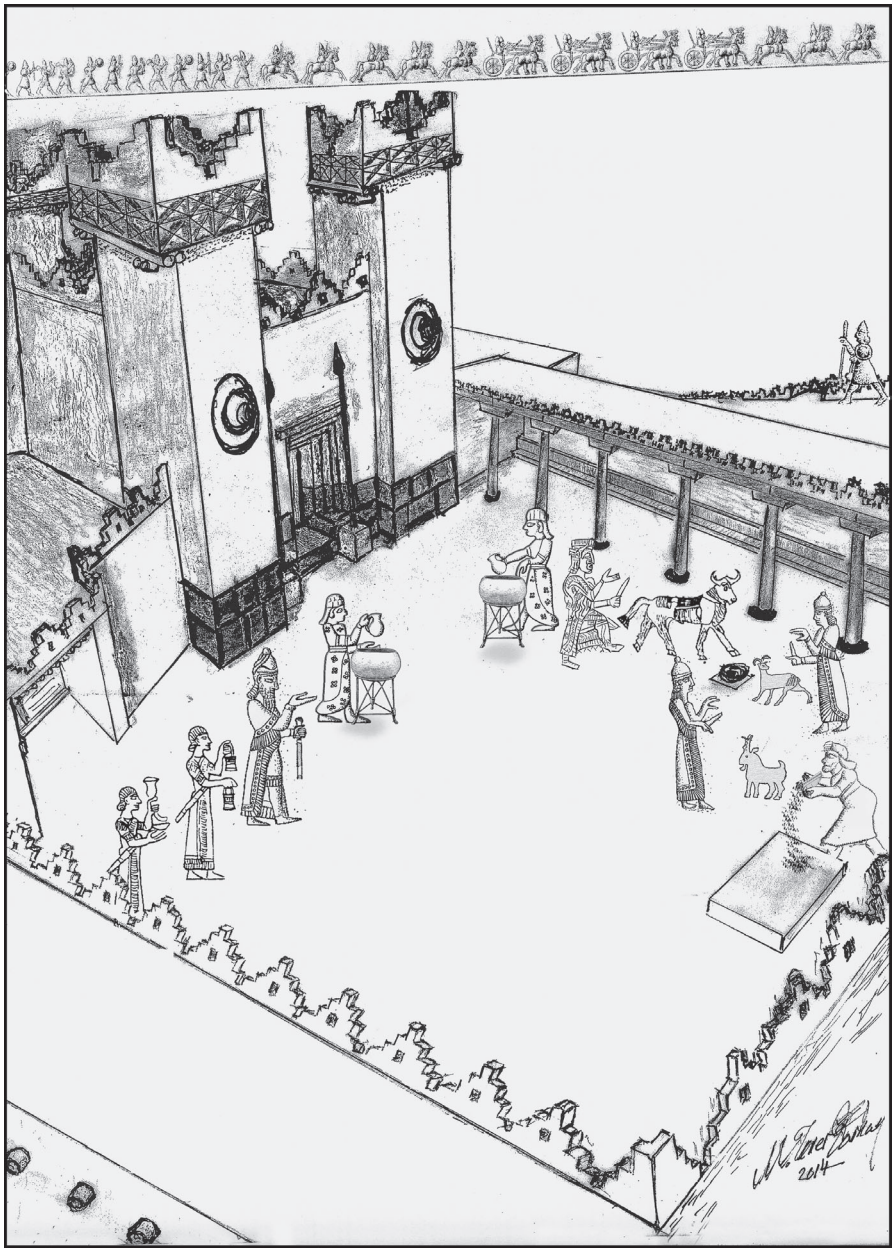

Fig. 21. Reconstruction of the Irmushini temple (author).

The room for keeping animal sacrifices (Figs. 17–18), aligned north–south and with dimensions of 5.50 × 1.50 m opens onto the temple's courtyard and faces this sacred place. It is very close to the sacrifice table and the stone altar. The sacred votive animals were brought here before the ceremonies. The west wall jutting out from the courtyard is 3.70 m long and 1.60 m wide, not including the entrance. Flat flagstones paved the threshold which had to be wide. Right in front, *in-situ* blocks of the courtyard paving can be seen in a row. Almost the entire structure was built within the tall and strong blockage system that constituted the foundations of a major structure to the east. The walls were partially painted with lime and in addition, a large number of blue, red and black fresco fragments have been unearthed. Traces of dye can also be seen on some wooden remains. Evidently, the inside of the place was very well taken care of.[123]

The sacrifice/libation table is situated right in front of the place, 3.20 m west of the bank (Figs. 18–19, 21). Built from mud-brick, it measures 2.30 × 1.55 m and is 0.53 m high. Its top is covered with mud-brick square blocks. The top and the sides were plastered with a thin layer of lime. It is assumed to be either the sacrifice table or a platform where votive offerings were displayed.[124] In my opinion, because of its location, the former is the valid interpretation. However, this is arguable: it is almost impossible to assume that a huge and very heavy bull could be sacrificed on this fragile construction. It would certainly have struggled even if its feet had been tied. Also, the table would definitely have been damaged with the mud bricks falling apart. It would have required rebuilding after every sacrifice ceremony. In my opinion, the sacrifices were made at the stone altar. The blood poured into the libation cup was brought to the altar. While the best parts of the raw or cooked meat were offered to the god, the blood in the libation cup was poured onto the table slowly and with prayers. The sacrifice's blood spreading over the white table would please the god, along with the other offerings. After the ceremonies, the table was again plastered with lime.

The *in-situ* round rock altar (Figs. 18, 21–23) situated in the north-east of the courtyard suggests that live sacrifices were made in the courtyard. It is 5.85 m north-west of the sacrifice table. Built from sandstone, its diameter is 0.87 m and its sides are 0.22 m high. The inside looks like a very flat and broad dish; sloping towards the hole in the middle. The diameter of the hole is 0.16 m. The hole is closed with a well-finished, round-headed, big stone plug.[125]

[123] Erzen 1971, 335.
[124] Erzen 1968, 415.
[125] Erzen 1968, 415; 1969, 407; also see Çilingiroğlu 2011a, 199.

Fig. 22. Round rock altar in the courtyard of the Irmushini temple (author's archive).

Fig. 23. Round rock altar, in the 'sacred place', the north corridor of the Irmushini temple (photograph by E. Konyar).

A monumental structure/apadana (Figs. 8.14, 17–18) is found in one of the highest parts of the Lower Fortress that borders the eastern side of the courtyard and covers an area of approximately 45.00 × 40.00 m. Its foundation system was a first in the Urartian architecture: *mühre* between two wide mud-brick walls, sun-dried mud covering blocks on top plus stone filling and sun-dried mud covering blocks on top. The widths of the mud-brick and stone fillings vary between 2.50 and 3.40 m. This powerful filling constitutes the foundation of the monumental structure. The ground of the courtyard is about 2 m lower than the upper level of the filling. At the same time, the filling on the bedrock broadens and elevates the area. The height of the filling exceeds 4.00 m in the sloped parts. The fresco fragments with lily pattern provide information about the building's interior wall decoration. It is referred to as the Monumental Entrance Building or Apadana. It is inferred that the building opened to the temple's courtyard through a special passage – which should have had steps – in the north-west. However, we lack detailed knowledge of the dimensions and architecture of the gate passage due to the collapse of the northern mud-brick fortification wall.[126] This monumental building must have been connected to the entrance/exit tower in the south-east of the fortress, near Uç Kale, via a special corridor – probably covered on top, protected and connecting the palace with the temple. I believe that it housed meetings of high-ranking generals and important officers of the Sardurihinili Fortress and was where important guests were entertained: it is quite unreasonable to assume that anyone other than the king and the royal family was a guest at the palace.

When the high and thick mud-brick walls of the temple collapsed gradually, very thick destruction layers were formed along with the remains of severe fires. Among these layers, very valuable pieces were found. A bronze shield piece, found on the floor near where sacrificial animals were kept, reflects the prowess of Urartian metal workmanship. The reliefs on the bronze shield piece depict lions and bulls. It surely belonged to one of the two sacred shields placed on the façade of the temple (Fig. 21).[127]

Large and small inscribed, basalt pieces, found at the entrance of the temple, along with another large piece found nearby, are assumed to belong to the building inscription. A piece with lines half-drawn was probably left unfinished on account of some sudden disaster.[128]

[126] Erzen 1969, 406; 1970, 500; 1971, 335.
[127] Erzen 1971, 336.
[128] Erzen 1966, 506; 1968, 415. For the unfinished inscription, see also Dinçol 1987, 102, no. 8, fig. 8.

Important finds have also been unearthed in the destruction and fire layers of the north corridor that connected the temple with the palace. Among them are three clay tablets. The third one was found on the stone paving of the open courtyard located on the west side.[129] These tablets are the inventory records of votive gifts. A big stone inscription fragment and another inscription with broken sides (thought to have been placed in the mud-brick wall of the corridor) command attention. The basalt inscription is decorated with a dark red and colourful border.[130]

One of the most interesting finds is a spearhead 0.64 m in length. It resembles 'Haldi's sacred spearhead' seen on the pyramidal roof of the Musasir temple that is depicted on the famous relief.[131] However, no such spear can actually be found on top of the sacred temples, nor do the temples have pyramidal roofs. The spearhead must have come from one of the sacred spears placed on either side of the entrance (Fig. 21).

The altar pedestal, made from hollow limestone with dimensions of 0.88 × 0.77 m, further enriched the findings. Inside the pedestal is a hole with a diameter of 0.10 m. The upper part, where the altar is placed, is carved in the size of the altar to prevent it from sliding sideways under pressure. Thus, with this definite evidence, the number of altars in the temple increases to three, but we do not know where this third altar is situated.[132]

Some of the important finds unearthed in the north corridor are: a bronze head of a wand that must have belonged either to a king, high priest or state governor; two small, trefoil-juglets with handles; a laced-boot shaped, a fine quality Urartian red burnished drinking or libation vessel (rhyton); yellow and dark red fresco paint material; a round ceramic pipe of the temple's roof drainage system; a typical bronze spearhead and three Scythian horse-trapping fragments of antler, one of which is in Animal Style, three-holed and eagle beaked, found in the extension of the severe fire layer; and a piece of blue-dyed furniture bearing the shape of a pine cone.[133]

The courtyard's passageway to the outside is at the south-west corner, near the *temenos* south wall, under this section of the portico. It must have been used to bring in the sacrificial animals and taking them to the temple's private depot.

[129] Erzen 1966, 505; 1970, 498.
[130] Erzen 1970, 496–98.
[131] Erzen 1968, 414.
[132] Erzen 1968, 415.
[133] Erzen 1966, 505; 1968, 415; 1970, 498.

Other annexes of the temple surround it on three sides. Entry into these magnificent rooms is from the Entrance Hall (Fig. 17–18), which is adjacent to the temple's south wall. The entry is through the courtyard. *In-situ* stone blocks of the courtyard paving can be seen right in front of the basalt threshold. On the left side of the entrance floor, a deep, almost square, stone basin is found. This is filled with holy water used for symbolic purification. The north wall of the hall, adjacent to the temple, is 10 m long. The south wall is shared with the private depot. It meets the main corridor on the open west side. The sun-dried mud bank placed against the wall and all three walls are decorated with rich patterned frescoes. The bank must have been so placed for the elite who came to the Pillared Hall and other rooms to sit and rest.[134]

Leaning against the common wall is the private depot of the temple (Figs. 17–18), approximately 10 × 10 m in extent. The entrance is certainly from the main corridor, since it cannot be from the east or south. Inside are 16 medium-sized pithoi aligned in two separate groups in a north to south direction, arranged in two rows and in groups of four. They are buried half under the ground. The distance between them in the east and south is quite wide, almost corridor-like to allow easy supply and service.[135]

The magnificent Pillared Hall with benches (Figs. 17–18) was undoubtedly used for religious ceremonies and meetings. It was also the most convenient place for gatherings in the long and cold winters. There were no furnaces for heating, but it is known that mobile braziers were used in Urartu. Such braziers must have been used in this hall, in similar rooms and also at the palace.

Coming from the courtyard into the Entrance Hall one reaches the eastern door of the hall. The door is on the main corridor situated in a north–south direction and intersecting with the hall at a right angle. Round iron shaft pieces of the door leaves were found. The dimensions of the room are approximately 24.4 × 23 m. The north and east walls still partially exist. Due to the steep slope of the southern hillside in this area, the foundation of the south wall, which does not exist today, had stood on the wall filling that can also be seen in the Entrance Hall on the east side of the courtyard and in some other fortress buildings. With this system, the southern temple area was widened and strengthened from one end to the other. Sun-dried mud benches that are 0.35 m high and 0.50 m wide surround the hall. The mud plaster is decorated with blue and red geometrical motifs. Walls are decorated with these rich motifs as well. They were found on the mud-brick pieces that they belong to and in some undamaged sections. Well-finished stone blocks and square-shaped pillar

[134] Erzen 1988, 9.
[135] Erzen 1988, 9; Tarhan 2004d, 82.

pedestals with corner projections are aligned on the same axis in threes and in a series of three. Square-based wooden columns resting on stone pedestals support the high ceiling. Frescos with geometric patterns can be seen on the large wooden beam that is presumed to belong to the ceiling. Thus, we may presume that all wooden construction must have been decorated with patterns.[136]

The depot for votives has an entrance facing east on the main corridor that opens to the north corridor (Figs. 17–18). It is the first of the rooms with common walls, aligned towards the west in the north corridor. It is situated on the east-hand side, yet it does not open to this corridor. The dimensions of the sacred room surrounded with wide common walls are 2.70 × 4.50 m; the entrance is 0.98 m wide. None of the sacred votive gifts that were placed in the temple and its surroundings during the ceremonies and were later kept in this special room has remained as a result of the Scythian invasions and the subsequent lootings. We presume that the room was used for such an important purpose because of its meaningful location and its proximity to the temple. Besides, there is no other room near the temple in such a location.[137]

The temple's north corridor (Figs. 17–18), reached off the main corridor, extends from the north of the temple to the west of the palace. It is 67 m long and 4 m wide. It tilts slightly towards the west. The eastern end starts at the north wall of the temple. In this section, six–seven courses of fine stone masonry is found extending from the foundations hewn into bedrock. The first course resembles a bank projecting to the north. Well-finished limestone blocks were built in draw-back order, in an ascending echelon. This technique provided resistance for the high walls. The height of the wall is 4.00 m. In this section, the ground of the north corridor is lower than that of the temple courtyard. Hence, the wall is entirely exposed. The ceiling of the corridor is assumed to have been covered with wooden material. First of all, round, thick rafters that exceed 4 m in height are aligned on the two mud-brick walls with gaps left in between. Thick and wide wooden beams are placed side by side on the rafters that will carry the whole weight of the ceiling. Beam edges are built as assembling parts. This is further evidence of how advanced Urartians were in carpentry. The wooden surface that prevents any dust from falling down is covered on top with small pumice stones which are then covered with bulrush, twigs and grass. This cover prevents thick mud mortar seeping down into the crevices in the pumice stones. The cover also enabled these same materials to adapt to one another. The thick mud layer is the final main material of the

[136] Erzen 1965, 555; 1967, 469; 1968, 413; 1971, 336; 1974, 549; 1988, 9; Tarhan 2004a, 82.

[137] For detailed information on the location and purpose of these rooms in Urartian religion architecture, see Çilingiroğlu 2011a, 196.

flat roof. It is plastered with thin polish to prevent leakage. By giving a slight incline to the mud covering, water accumulating on the flat roof gathers at the edges and pours down outside the corridor with ceramic pipes and wooden gargoyles. The corridor with dentils on both sides is also an alure extending from one end to the other. Segments of layers formed by debris and rubble carry traces of severe fires and reach 2.50 m in height in some quarters of the corridor. These have yielded valuable information.[138]

Traces of alteration and ruin date back to the short second settlement period when, evidently, the corridor was re-used. A large number of simple furnaces are scattered all over the corridor. Some are placed in the middle, some at the foot of the north wall. Stones are laid around the pits in the ground. Inside, several ceramic fragments and pottery dating back to Urartian period have been unearthed. The two large pithoi found lying on the ground horizontally had been used by the inhabitants of the second settlement. Scythian arrow-heads and bone-antler horse-trapping elements found in the corridor and in some of the rooms enable the dating of these traces.[139]

Rooms that serve different purposes and open to the corridor in both directions and one hall, similar to the Pillared Hall mentioned above, with its annexes prove that the Lower Fortress is also an exclusive place in terms of religious practices.

The most mysterious is the first of the corridor's northern rooms situated on the east side: a sacred place with a round rock altar (Figs. 17–18, 23). It is straight across from the cella with two entrances side by side. However, its ground level is 1.60 m below the thresholds. It is possible that wooden ladders were used to ascend and descend, but we cannot be certain. The width of the place is 4.00 m. We do not know its length, since most of the hall is non-existent due to the collapse of the northern fill. However, four thick rafters that were placed parallel to each other in an east–west direction to carry have been unearthed in the debris of the collapse. The position in which these juniper rafters, 4.00 m long and with broken ends, were found proves that the collapse was sudden and that they were lined up throughout the hall. They also shed light on the width and length of the room:[140] as an architectural rule of thumb, when building wooden ceilings, rafters would be aligned cross-wise rather than length-wise for reasons of stability. Door widths are different. The narrow door passage mentioned above must have been used only by priests and a few

[138] Erzen 1966, 504; 1967, 469; 1968, 403, 413–14; 1970, 497, 501; also see Tarhan 1975, 47, fig. 2 and publications in nn. 133–137.

[139] Erzen 1968, 414; 1970, 497.

[140] In Erzen 1967, 469 (length is stated to be 4.00 m, width is stated to be 3.00 m).

elite people. This doorway and the other wider one must have been the viewing points, almost like royal balconies, during sacrifice ceremonies. The *in-situ* altar is made from sandstone. Its diameter is 0.73 m, the diameter of its hole is 0.11 m, and the height of its side is 0.23 m. The inside of the altar, similar to the one in the courtyard, is in the form of a wide and flat dish with high sides. Its pedestal is also different, made from irregular stones. The bloodstains on the stones can still be seen today, after thousands of years. Small channels heading in several different directions under the altar dispersed the blood of the sacrifice over a wide area, to reach the deep bottom of the fill. The skull and antler of a goat, assumed to have been a sacrifice, and some other animal bones were found near the altar. It is known that a bull and two sheep were sacrificed to the god Irmushini. This discrepancy awaits clarification. The altar has been taken to Van Museum to prevent it from being damaged.[141]

Sacrifice animals certainly must have been brought to the room through the service corridor, which opened to the section that is today missing. Otherwise, it would be unreasonable and impossible for sacrifices to be brought here through the Entrance Hall. Due to the collapses of the north hillside from time to time, the remains of this place are not very clear, as is the case for several other mud-brick buildings. A bull sacrifice here would have been out of the question because of the dimensions of the place and the size and shape of the altar (the altar is not completely buried in the ground and it would have moved out of place and its high sides would have broken into pieces). I believe that this sacred place was used during the long winter season.

It is possible to assess use and purpose of the rooms that open to the corridor by their dimensions and architectural specifications and the finds inside them. All of the rooms in the west, extending all the way to the open courtyard, belong to priests. Some of the northern rooms that are aligned from east to west differ in architectural terms: two are interconnected with a doorway. However, one of the rooms opens to the north corridor. Cornice sockets are seen at the doors. These can also be seen in the door niches. Door shafts are visible in doorways hewn into bedrock. Some doorways have been defined as windows: ten windows are stated to exist. Windows, varying in width between 1.25 and 1.55 m, rising up from floor level and opening to the north have never been seen in any other Urartian centre. The dimensions of the T-shaped basalt 'blind windows' resembling wooden windows found in Uç Kale are definite evidence. In fact, doorways have been defined as windows as a result of the collapse of the rooms behind. It is acknowledged that there were double

[141] Erzen 1967, 469.

doors built one behind the other in the doorways of the palace's northern annexes to avoid the cold.[142]

The south rooms, when compared with the north, have remained largely intact. All five, along with their high walls, are undamaged. A common characteristic, shared with the north rooms, is that they are not connected.

The first room: adjoins the depot for votives on the east side.

The second measures 5.70 × 4.40 m. The width of the entrance in the north-east corner is 0.95 m. The walls are almost 3.00 m high. All around the inside is a bank made of irregular stones. This is 0.68 m wide and 0.35 m high. The cracks and crevices in the masonry were filled with mud mortar. Probably, the surfaces were also plastered with the same mortar. Furnaces were found in the middle of the room. Many pieces of cattle bone were discovered in them. One of the furnaces was placed on the bank situated in the south. Some interesting finds were unearthed in the room: bronze plate fragments, a bucket handle, scale armour plates, bracelets with snake heads, ceramic pieces of various qualities, and a spindle made from alabaster. The high number of iron spearheads found in the collapsed layer on the ground, at approximately 0.50–0.60 m elevation, may have fallen down from above. The existence of furnaces and bone pieces signals that the room was used as a kitchen and dining hall. The furnace on the bench is presumed to have been built during the second settlement.[143]

The third room (5.60 × 4.50 m) has walls around 2.50 m high painted with lime. Blue fresco fragments belonging to the walls of the Pillared Hall were also found. A high number of cattle bones, second quality ceramic fragments and oxidised iron pieces were discovered in the room. The doorway was closed with a mud-brick wall. Why the room was closed is unknown; it is presumed to have been built during the second settlement.[144]

The fourth room is 8.50 × 4.50 m; the doorway in the north-east corner is 1.13 m long; the walls are around 2.50 m high, painted white. A bank, adjacent to the southern wall, extends for 4.50 m from the south-west corner, in an easterly direction. An *in-situ* pithos is across from the bank, in front of the southern wall. It is like those found in the north corridor. Five seal marks are seen on the neck, showing its capacity. The collapse of the ceiling resulted in the caving in of the mouth and neck parts. In the frontal part, a wooden piece from the collapsed ceiling was found. It is 1.40 m long, 0.09 m wide and 0.05 m thick. A depot inscription made from sandstone was also discovered

[142] Erzen 1968, 414; 1969, 408; 1970, 497 ('blind windows', p. 496).
[143] Erzen 1969, 408.
[144] Erzen 1970, 498.

in the room. Its dimensions are 0.40 × 0.28 m and its thickness is 0.08 m. The inscription states in six lines that this depot with a capacity of '5000 *kapi*' was built by Sarduri II.[145] We reckon that the pithoi in the north corridor were taken from this depot in the period of the second settlement. Fragments of large storage jars and the remains of tandoors and cattle bones indicate that this room was used both as a depot and a kitchen in that period. This large room must have been the private depot of the priests and other officers. It seems that various supply jars and cups for liquid were also placed on the bench.[146]

The fifth room is 8.55 × 4.10 m in extent. The doorway in the north-east corner is 1 m wide. This is yet another large room. Its walls were torn down for the most part. The walls between the north-east and north-west corners are between 0.70 and 1.90 m high. Their thickness differs from that of other rooms: the north wall is 1.60 m thick, the south 1.40 m, the east 1.50 m. Traces of severe fire can be seen on the ground. In particular, in the section extending along the north wall, the colour of the mud-brick has turned deep

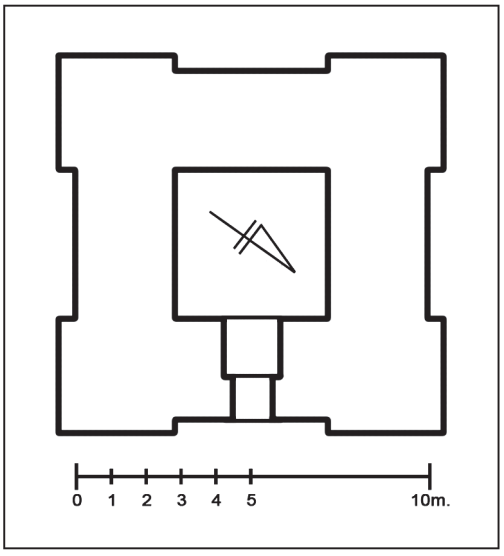

Fig. 24. Plan of the Irmushini temple (author's archive).

[145] For inscription, see Dinçol 1987, 97, no. 2, fig. 2.
[146] Erzen 1970, 499.

red because of the fire. Some 85% of the ceramic fragments found belong to second quality rough clay kitchen ware. Among the small finds is a Scythian bone-antler horse-trapping fragment.[147] Its purpose/use is unknown.

In the north corridor, an open courtyard is situated at the western end, extending towards the north-west corner of the fifth room. The ground of the courtyard is paved with stones. The corridor makes a right angle at the south-west corner of the courtyard, heads towards the north, and then meets the southern corridor of the palace. The courtyard is 4.50 m wide and 6.50 m long. A 2.10 m-wide gateway allows entry into the courtyard from the north corridor. It is assumed that the corridor was lighted when the gate was open and it also had defensive purposes.[148]

The guard room (Fig. 17) borders the western side of the courtyard. The doorway opens to the courtyard and is 0.90 m wide. The room's dimensions are 8.80 × 4.50 m. The thickness of the walls is 1.50 m. The height of the walls varies between 1.20 and 1.85 m. The walls were painted with lime. The ground was also covered with compressed lime mortar and plastered with a thick layer of lime. Flagstones were paved on top, as seen in *in-situ* sections. A large lime furnace built on stone paving was found near the door passage. It is almost square in form: 1.20 × 1.35 m. It was plastered with mud. An average-sized pithos was found in horizontal position, broken into pieces. Evidently, the breakage was due to the collapse of the ceiling. Inferring from the find that it was not buried underground, it must have been placed on support bases. A very small number of ceramic fragments were found, of second quality kitchen pottery made from rough clay, mostly around the furnace. A bone amulet, a clay fertility symbol and a Scythian arrowhead are the small finds worth noting. This must have been the room for guards on duty who controlled the palace corridors and temple entry/exit. A small depot connected to this room is adjacent to its south wall. Its north wall is 4.70 m long. This part had caved in because of the southern slope's incline. The east and west walls are 5.60 m and 4.40 m respectively; they were partially torn down as a result of the cave-in. This room was also painted with lime; the cracks and crevices in the ground were filled with thick lime mortar. Fragments of pithoi prove that the room was a depot.[149]

[147] Erzen 1971, 336.
[148] Erzen 1970, 497.
[149] Erzen 1971, 336.

Temple of the King's Cult

Erzen named the building Uç Kale (Spired Citadel/Fortress), due to its position attached to the eastern tip of the Lower Fortress (Figs. 6, 8.15, 17). The masonry of the building is one of the masterpieces of the ancient western world (Fig. 25). In Erzen's words, 'Uç Kale is a monumental work of Urartian art, that exceeds Hellenistic and Roman stonework…'.[150] 'It forms a rectangular projection in the east–west direction, annexed to the east walls of the Lower Fortress…

Fig. 25. The temple of the King's Cult-Uç Kale, from the east (author's archive).

[150] Erzen 1988, 7, pls. 6a, 11a–b, 13a–b, 14a, 48.

Surrounded by a wall of finest workmanship never seen before in an Urartian fortress…'.[151]

In his classification of the Urartian fortification masonry and design, Çilingiroğlu names the technique the 'Uç Kale method'.[152]

From 1961 onwards, in the earlier campaigns, Uç Kale was named 'fortress gate' or 'entrance complex' due to its position and a huge mud-brick ruin there, pointing to the existence of a splendid building. The two large bronze door-rings brought to light raised the hopes of finding the entrance to the Lower Fortress.[153]

The outer dimensions of the building are 39.50 × 23.92 m; the well-preserved stone walls reach up to 4.00 (north and south) and 5.20 m (in the east), with the west wall (2.80 m thick), successfully integrated to the eastern wall of the Lower Fortress. The architectural remains reflect the plan of a basement with two rooms (Fig. 26.1–3). In typical Urartian practice, the foundations were placed painstakingly in stepped courses on the main rock, the work so skilful that it is scarcely possible to detect any misplacement. Projecting bastions enliven the façades with a square plan, as in the tower-temples (Fig. 26.1). They measure 4.03 m in width, and 8.66 m in length. The distance between projections is 1.10 m on the northern and southern walls, 8.60 m on the eastern, while their thick and strong walls provide evidence of a multi-storey building.[154]

The inner faces of the northern walls of the basement rooms are also impressive. So too is the bearing system that suggests the existence of the stone and mud-brick work of a fortification wall, but gradually levelled due to the main rock descending towards the east. Because they are basement rooms, their walls were not plastered. The stonework of the foundations is no less impressive than the techniques apparent in the stone body of the fortification system, which, as mentioned above, form the essential infrastructure to bear the high mud-brick walls.

Basement room I is located to the west and measures 11.00 × 8.60 m, while a 3.00 m- thick mud-brick wall lies between this and the basement other room. There is no door in the wall, indicating that the rooms are self-contained. The main rock formation at the northern corner, which covers one third of the room, was left unworked (Fig. 26.1), but the floor comprises a mixture of lime and rubble used as filling material, a practice unique to Çavuştepe. In this corner, the height of the wall is more than 4.00 m below the floor. The stepped

[151] Erzen 1969, 404; Tarhan 2007a, 117, 129, fig. 1.3, 130, fig. 2.1, 131, figs. 3–4, 136, fig. 10; 2007b, 268–69, figs. 1–2, 271, fig. 3.1, 280, fig. 7.2.
[152] Çilingiroğlu 1983, 33, pl. 32, figs. 13–14.
[153] Erzen 1962, 624; 1963, 541; 1964, 569.
[154] Erzen 1970, 495; Tarhan 2007a, 118; 2007b, 269.

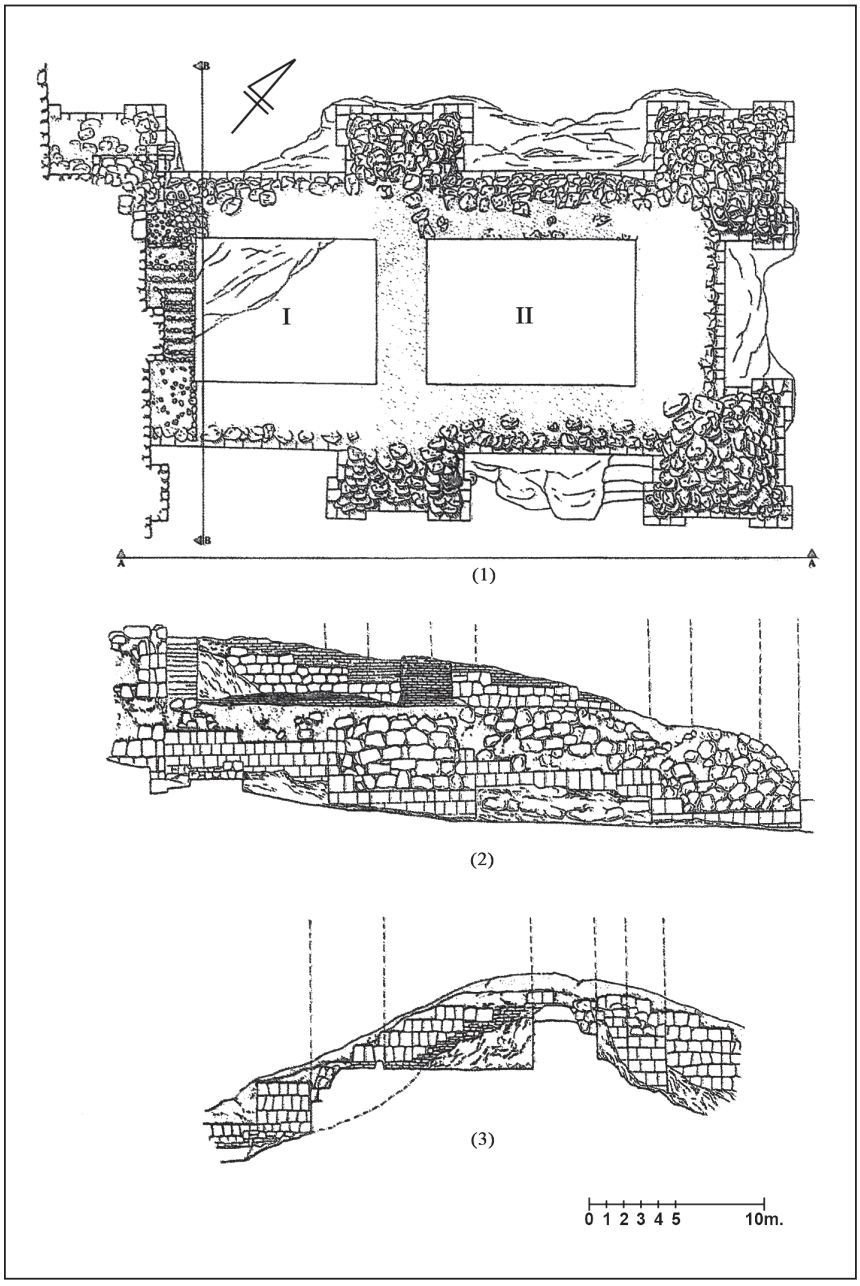

Fig. 26. (1) Plan of the temple of the King's Cult-Uç Kale, (2) View from the south, (3) North–south section (drawing by Ü. Sirel; author's archive).

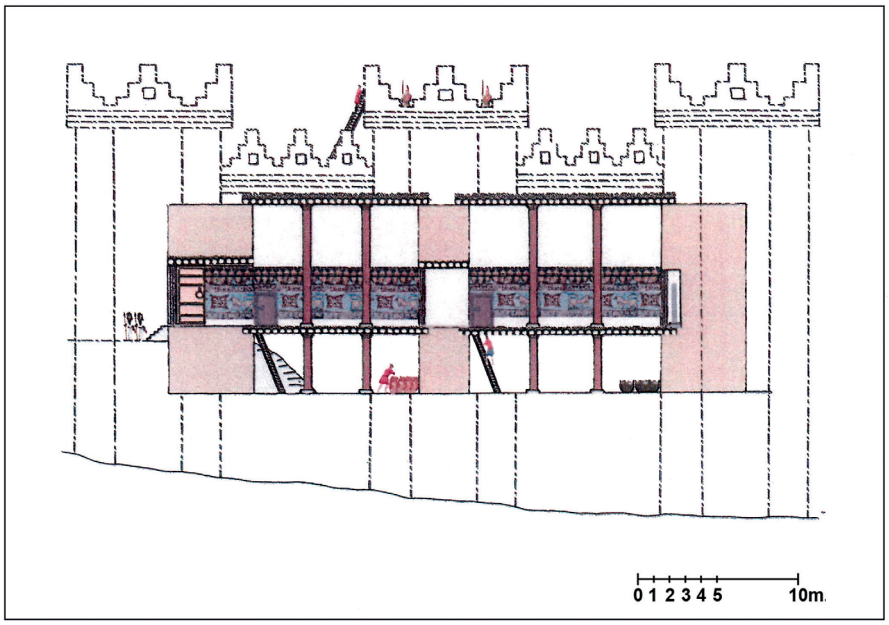

Fig. 27. Reconstruction of the temple of the King's Cult, inner view from the south (author).

foundation courses and foundation walls worked into this rocky protrusion bear the western wall of Uç Kale. If the room had had a different function, the rock mass at the corner would have been removed. It is quite certain that such an operation would have been a trivial task for Urartian architects. Thus, we name these isolated rooms as basements. Both were entered from the top, the upper floor, by wooden stairs (Fig. 27).[155]

Basement room II is located to the east and is slightly larger than room I: 12.20 × 8.60 m. Two sandstone column bases in the western section are worthy of note, while numerous remains of large wooden beams and posts give at least an idea of the roof support and covering systems (Fig. 27). Since some wood fragments were painted with various colours, they must belong the upper level. In the same context, a great number of fresco fragments was also found, on which the background colour is 'Urartian blue', while the floral, palmette, flowers-and-leaves and geometric motifs were painted with red, white, blue and black. A palmette motif and fresco fragments found in this room bear depictions

[155] Erzen 1966, 503; 1967, 469; Tarhan 2007a, 119, 132, fig. 5.11, 136, fig. 9; 2007b, 269, 271, fig. 3.1, 280, fig. 7.1.

of a figure with top-boots, bronze helmets, a quiver and a war-carriage with cavalry on it. A sandstone depot inscription was also found here.[156]

Two other sandstone depot inscriptions were found outside the building, near the southern wall, between the two bastions.[157]

While Erzen was uncertain about the main function of Uç Kale, the inscriptions of Sarduri II, the bronze objects and frescoes were all the solid evidence for him that this building complex served as a royal storehouse, in two sections.[158]

The storehouse inscriptions belonged to grain stores, but it is evident that these rooms did not serve as storehouses for grain. There are no traces of pithoi sunk into the ground, and the inscriptions were not found *in situ*. When and how the latter were brought here, however, remains unclear.[159]

I believe that the five basalt 'blind windows' unearthed in the mud-brick ruins to the north of Uç Kale (Fig. 28) give important clues about its function. They resemble a 'T' with a thick leg, finely and gradually carved in the interior, and forming three steps, which reflect wooden windows with a thick lintel: approximately 1.45 m high × 0.60 m wide × 0.25 m thick. Another one was found Çavuştepe village, and a second was used as an inscription base on the

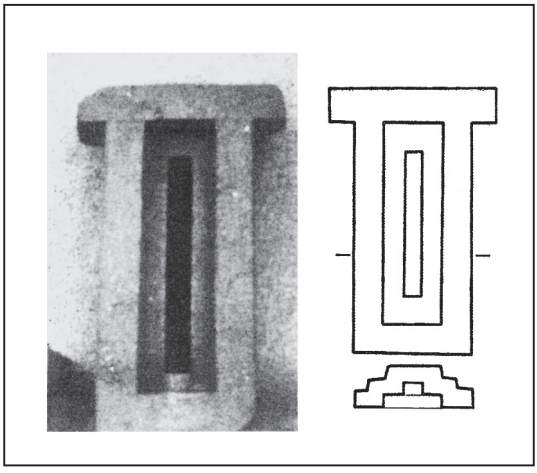

Fig. 28. Blind window (author's archive).

[156] Erzen 1962a, 624; 1963, 541; 1966, 503; 1967, 469; Tarhan 2007a, 120; 2007b, 270, 273.
[157] Erzen 1965, 554. For these three inscriptions, see Dinçol 1987, 95.
[158] Erzen 1988, 10.
[159] Tarhan 2007a, 120; 2007b, 273.

lintel of the main gate of Hoşab Fortress.[160] Their find-spot and positions indicate also that the high and strong mud-brick walls had collapsed gradually.

According to Erzen, the mud-brick walls of Uç Kale were decorated with a number of blind windows.[161] I do not think that they were used for decorative purposes. These blind windows must bear religious connotations. The T-shaped rock niches surrounding the slopes of the Tushpa Citadel represent blind windows. They might have been the symbols of some sort of religious belief or passages to the unknown of gods, goddesses and ancestors. The citadel is protected all round by these niches. In my opinion, the mysteries and keys of Uç Kale must be sought in the Temple of the Ancestor Cult and at the Sacred Area of Mother and Daughter of Sarduri II at Tushpa, and also on the famous reliefs of Adilcevaz/Kef Kalesi. The aforementioned temple with double cellae is particular to Tushpa; the Sacred Area… is a unique example of Urartian religious architecture where the most remarkable elements are in doubles: two monumental rock niches, and the magnificent two huge basalt steles standing on the massive bases, and two sockets for small steles on the bank at the protruding corner of the western niche.[162]

The lines following the usual titles of the king in the introduction of the annals, are quite interesting: '… Sarduri speaks: I have given out an order: … let there be presented as a sacrifice one sheep to the God Haldi; and one sheep to the divinity (of king) Sarduri…'.[163]

If this reading, i.e. 'to the divinity of Sarduri' is correct, then we have here evidence for a status and privilege never seen before in Urartian inscriptions. However, if we follow the alternative translation, 'one sheep to the god (of king) Sarduri', then what is the identity of this unnamed divinity? Is it Irmushini, to whom Sarduri II dedicated a temple? I favour the former translation. If my view is correct – and the archaeological evidence supports it – 'Uç Kale' will acquire a new identity in religious procedures. Possibly we are dealing here with the divinisation of Sarduri II or a newly established ruler's cult by the same king. Alternatively, there may be new religious politics, i.e. a reform put into effect by Sarduri, the establishment of a pantheon that also represents the state religion, while accepting Haldi of Musasir as having been the supreme god in the past, in the reign of Sarduri II's great-grandfathers, Ishpuini and Minua.[164]

[160] Erzen 1968, 412; 1970, 496; 1971, 334; 1988, 7, pl. 9c. For blind windows, see also Tarhan 2007a, 121, nn. 6–7; 2007b, 273, nn. 23–24.

[161] Erzen 1970, 496; 1988, 10.

[162] See my chapter on Tushpa/Van Fortress below, esp. Figs. 17, 43 and 47.

[163] König 1955–57, no. 102; *UKN* 156; Payne 2006, no. 9.1.2.

[164] Tarhan 2007a, 122–24, 133–34, figs. 6.3, 7; 2007b, 272, 274–77, figs. 4.3, 5.

In my view, the period of Rusa II (*ca*. 685–645 BC) is the last glorious phase of Urartian cultural history, confirmed both by archaeological and epigraphical evidence. Most of the known relief sculptures date back to this period, the most important of which were unearthed by Bilgiç and Öğün. These are the enigmatic reliefs on the basalt bases from Adilcevaz/Kef Kalesi (*Haldiei* URU.^{KUR}*Ziuquni*), depicting a religious scene. The architectural similarity of the splendid building on the reliefs to Uç Kale is obvious (Fig. 29). Here the scene includes trees of life between the bastions, winged demons or gods on lions making a fertility offering or libation, eagles holding rabbits in their beaks, and the T-shaped windows on the bastions and walls. These figures and motifs undoubtedly represent a religious ceremony, which takes place in front of or within a sacred building. In the inscription on the base, Rusa II celebrates the construction of an *ashihusi* building, whose meaning is unclear and still disputed.[165]

It is obvious from the archaeological evidence and our observations that Uç Kale is an elaborate copy of the 'Temple of the Ancestor Cult' at Tushpa, albeit on a larger scale. The two halls on the upper floor, where the cult ceremonies took place, were decorated with rich frescoes, while the ceiling too was painted with brisk colours (Fig. 27). The entrance to the building was from the west, the façade looks to the Irmushini temple (the above-mentioned bronze door-rings must belong to the wooden door leaves of the temple) (Fig. 30). I must point out that the double bastions of the building fit perfectly to the plan of a square tower-temple. The area in front of the entrance was neatly hewn out of bedrock. Three *in-situ* column-pedestals aligned in this area are noteworthy. The diameter of the basalt pedestals is 1.00 m; their thickness is 0.26 m. One is situated on the surface of the bedrock, the other two are located on 1.30 m-tall postaments in the shape of truncated cones and meticulously hewn out of bedrock. The location of the two other pedestals unearthed in the debris is unknown. In my opinion, this area must have been the columned entrance gallery of the temple. The ornamented bronze belt pieces with bull and lion engravings found here are unique and must have belonged to a loyal and a very important person. The many arrow- and spearheads prove that the temple was attacked fiercely and defended. A three-legged, wide, basalt bowl is unique and I believe it too must have belonged to the temple. It was probably a sacred incense bowl. In the light of these facts, I believe that this religious building was dedicated to the cult of Sarduri II, and to his divinity as seen in his inscription of the 'Sacred Area of Mother and Daughter' at Tushpa. We are yet far from understanding

[165] Tarhan 2007a, 124; 2007b, 277. For some publications on *ashihusi* building, see n. 38 above.

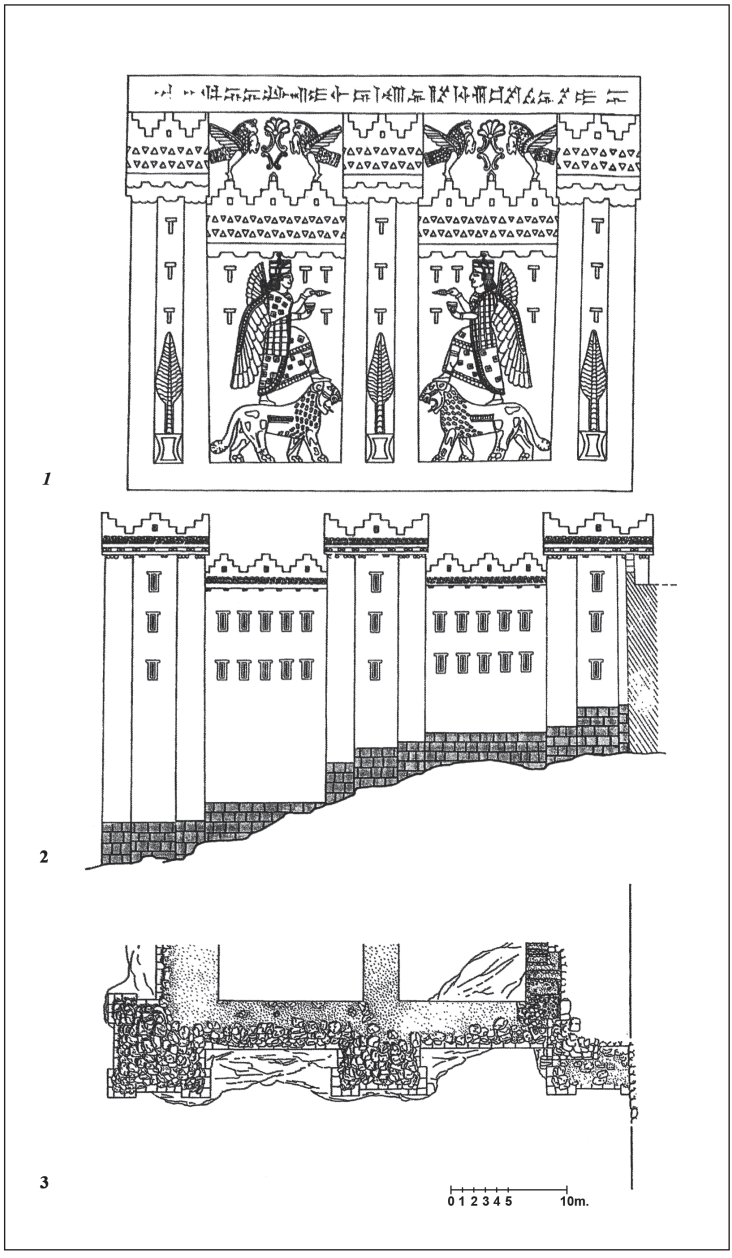

Fig. 29. Comparative appearances: (1) Relief from cult building at Adilcevaz Kef Kalesi, (2) Reconstruction of the temple of the King's Cult from the north (author), (3) Plan of the northern part of the temple (author's archive).

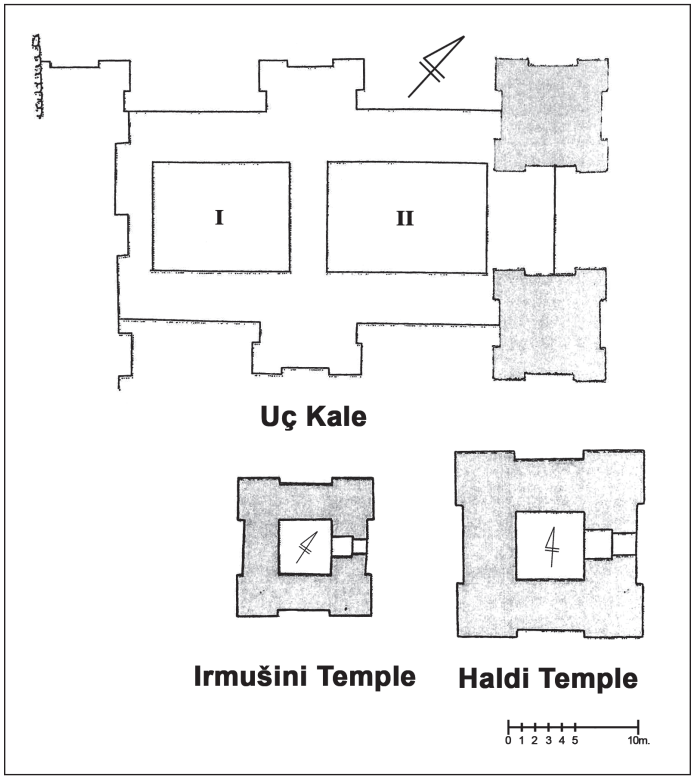

Fig. 30. Plans of the three temples (author).

the significance of double: double cellae, double niche, double steles, perhaps they are meaning of god + god-king, like the Egyptian pharaohs and later Alexander the Great, Antiochos I of Commagene and the others. Finally, I believe that this religious building was the temple of the king's cult.[166]

Provincial Palace

The state governor's palace is located on the south side of the Lower Fortress and, with its annexes, stretches along a wide plain in an east to west direction. The ground floor of the palace, along with the north and south corridors and four of the 18 pillars aligned in two rows are wholly hewn into bedrock,

[166] For column bases, see Erzen 1973, 440; bronze belt, Erzen 1976, 713; 1979b, 252, pl. 153, figs. 6–7; 1987, 309; Tarhan 2004a, 336; 2007a, 125; 2007b, 278.

Fig. 31. Provincial Palace, from the west (author's archive).

whereas the south wall is partially so. It is one of the most striking examples of Urartian architecture and almost competes with the rock architecture of Tushpa (Fig. 31).

In line with the Eastern character of Urartu, the palace was separated into two as *selamlık* (an area which women are forbidden to enter) and harem. Three very large cisterns hewn into bedrock are aligned on the ground floor, beneath the central hall in the middle. The harem *hammam* (baths) and *selamlık hammam*, in the west and east ends respectively, both open to the hall. The kitchen and its depots are located in the east of this building. It is to the east of the *selamlık hammam* and opens to the south corridor. Annexes such as the depot and service rooms open to the south and north corridors on each side of the hall. The harem toilet is situated to the west of the harem *hammam*. Excluding the south corridor, the palace covers approximately an area of 100 × 35 m.

The south corridor (Figs. 17–18, 32), which connects the Irmushini temple and the palace, is 197 m long.[167] The part lying between the temple and the palace is 78 m long. The corridor heads west after turning a right angle at its eastern end, after the 'open courtyard'; its width here is 3.20 m. However,

[167] Erzen 1975a, 59.

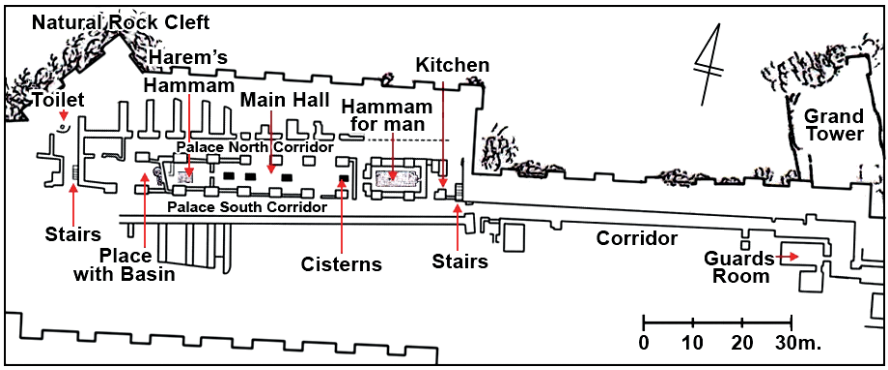

Fig. 32. Plan of the Provincial Palace (adapted from Erzen 1972a, fig. 5; new plan in detail by author; drawing by B. Batıkan).

the south wall of the corridor makes an incursion and for this reason the corridor gets narrower and reaches a width of 2.90 m. The narrower corridor passes through an entry point, where single-winged doors are detected on both sides. The length of the wooden beam is 1.55 m, it is 0.20 m wide and 0.12 m thick. The shaft-bearing stone block that supports the door wing and enables its opening and closure is made from lime. Its dimensions are 0.34 × 0.36 × 0.24 m. Its diameter is 0.08 m. Use and abrasion marks can easily be seen. A special socket resembling a niche was made for the door wing. In the entrance room, planks embedded in the ground are aligned in parallel at 0.25 m intervals. Their length is 2.50 m; their width is 0.20 m. Another plank with the same dimensions is placed on the north wall and parallel to this paving. These were most probably support and connection elements of a wooden stairway used to reach the roof of the corridor. It should be noted that numerous iron arrow- and spearheads were unearthed here. The corridor was used as a room during the second settlement. Pithoi pieces such as simple tandoors and common finds such as bones of cattle and other animals provide evidence of this second settlement. The corridor is completely covered with damage and fire debris.[168]

The corridor gets wider just before the palace and connects with the south corridor of the palace with the doorway at the western end. Here, at the southwest corner of the corridor, is a passage which opens at right angles to the south. As in the Irmushini temple and other important royal buildings, I believe that this passage, resembling a corridor, proves the existence of a service road

[168] Erzen 1968, 417; 1969, 410.

aimed at providing storage and supply services before entry into the palace. The two rooms situated to south, east of the passage and opening to the corridor, must have belonged to palace officials responsible for these services. In presenting the palace we follow the architectural plan.

The palace's south corridor runs to the south of the main hall (Figs. 17, 31–32). It is 84 m long and 4 m wide. Like the main hall and the north corridor, it was hewn into bedrock – the lower part of the southern wall is hewn, stepped and follows the bedrock formation from one end to the other. This rock cut also constitutes the foundation for thick and high mud-brick walls.

The second floor above the main hall, is reached via five-stepped stone stairways from both ends of the corridor, east and west. The steps are built from well-finished limestone blocks. Landings can be detected and upwards of these the steps are wooden. The window spaces in the south wall exceed in height a normal human being. In the western side, annexes opening to the corridor are lined up. These are the private depot buildings of the palace. Large pithoi used during the second settlement and two large limestone mortar stones placed on the ground side by side were unearthed in the fire and rubble layers.[169]

Kitchen etc.

The dimensions of the kitchen (Figs. 17, 32) are 8.30 × 7.40 m. It adjoins the *selamlık hammam*. The door at the south-west corner opens to the corridor. It is a fully equipped kitchen: there is a basin hewn into bedrock, 1.04 m in diameter, with the drainage system connected to it. Like the toilet system, this shows the Urartian respect for hygiene. The channel, hewn into bedrock is covered with flagstones. It gathers waste water from the *selamlık hammam* too and drains all dirty water away outside the fortress beneath the fortification walls to the north. The floor of the kitchen is paved with stones. The furnace is situated at the right-hand side of the entrance, adjacent to the stone wall. It is made from mud-brick and its lower part and sides are plastered. A large amount of ash and bone pieces were found inside it. The high, rectangular table made from stones and looking like a bank or a bench must have been used as a kitchen work-surface. The walls of the kitchen are painted with lime. The connecting supply depot/larder is situated to the east of the kitchen. The stairway mentioned above is also inside the kitchen. Two *in-situ* stone plinths found on the bedrock base must have belonged to the wooden columns supporting the stairway, i.e. the wooden floor of the second floor. The two mortar

[169] Erzen 1965, 555; 1966, 506; 1967, 471; 1968, 416; 1972a, 68.

stones mentioned, evidently taken out into the corridor during the second settlement, also belong to the kitchen. The small finds were found in the dense fire layers; they include and onyx stamp seal decorated with an eagle, a bronze bracelet with a snake's head, an ornament stone spindle, small juglets, clay lamps, bronze nails, iron spearheads, etc.[170]

The kitchen debris starts from the north of the kitchen, spreads down onto the plain and stretches across a very wide area until it reaches the King's Tower in the east. The thickness of the layers is approximately 2 m at the kitchen level. As explained before, rock steps were built from top to bottom to clear away the debris and take it down the hillside. In some sections, the natural holes and crevices in the bedrock were filled with lime mortar and rubble and brought in line with the slope of the hillside. The depth of the debris layers exceed 7.50 m in the foothills.[171]

The variety of the numerous finds, their qualities, the damage and fires, skeletons and other remains of the attack/atrocity help to shed light on the history of Sardurihinili, its phases and features. The number of small finds exceeds the total finds made elsewhere inside and outside Çavuştepe fortification walls. Three main layers can be detected in the first cross-section in the 2.00 m-thick debris layers at kitchen level:

The top layer is around 1 m thick and it is composed of dense mud-brick wall ruins.

The second layer, around 0.65 m in thickness, is very rich in furnace remains (ash and burnt animal bones) and small finds: bucrania, horse with wings, griffin, ostrich, star, rosette, various tower motifs on over 200 stamp sealed pieces, and Urartian hieroglyphs. These are unique pieces that had been either rarely or never seen before in Urartian art of seal engraving.[172]

The third layer, starting from the bedrock, is 0.35 m thick. Valuable finds were made here: the stylised bronze seal depicting a chamois is unique, and the horse head bronze bracelet is also one of the very important finds. It is interesting to see Haldi's sacred animal in the bull head ceramic rhyton fragment; this is a unique, first quality, burnished piece. There are other rhyton pieces in the shape of 'boots', again of similar quality, also draw attention. A handled small juglet is a votive offering of first quality.[173]

[170] Erzen 1966, 506.
[171] Erzen 1969, 412; 1970, 502; 1972b, 429.
[172] Erzen 1969, 412.
[173] Erzen 1969, 412.

Five layers can be detected in the second cross-section located between this area and the King's Tower hillside, lying in a north–south direction and reaching the bedrock. Depth, 7.50 m.

Layer one is excavation debris, 0.70 m in thickness.

The second layer is 1.70 m thick. Flagstones, rubble and wooden remains can be seen in the ruins of mud-brick walls. Numerous small finds, once again, draw attention. About 30% of the ceramic fragments are of first quality: burnished wide plates and bowls. The remainder consists mostly of second quality cooking pots such as cooking jars, bowls, soup-bowls and juglet in black or brick colour. Some pots were unearthed intact. The cylinder seal that is one of the unique works of the Urartian art of seal engraving is very impressive, depicting a winged genie and winged dragons in front of the sacred tree of life, and a winged lion can be seen on the stamp seal. A stone seal depicting a winged ibex is also worthy of appreciation. A bronze medallion is also unique: on one side, the encounter of a god with a goddess standing on their sacred animals is depicted. Bronze bracelets and rings constitute another group. A fragment of horse-trapping bearing the depiction of an eagle, cast in plastic, is one of the rare examples of Steppes Art.[174]

The third layer is 0.55 m thick. Compared with others, the mud-brick remains are fewer; animal bones (cattle and sheep) are found in various filling and paving stones, ash and coal pieces. A fifth of the ceramic fragments belong to first quality: burnished wide plate, jug and juglet pieces and stylised patterned handles. The rest are of second quality kitchen pots, cheese plates and small handled pots, all in either black or brick red. A lion-headed bracelet finished in bone and a decorated bone awl are noteworthy. A few iron spearheads were also found. The most interesting find, however, is the toilet stone of the palace. We believe it belonged to the *selamlık hammam*. Nevertheless, the location of the toilet that should have existed in the north-east of the palace is unknown.

The fourth layer is 0.40 m thick. Bones of cattle, sheep and goats, also a few of horses and poultry can be seen among ash and coal pieces in the dense remains of furnace and tandoor. The ceramics divide between 40% of first quality and 60% of second, with vessels similar to those in the third layer. Aside from large pieces of storage jar and pottery, tandoor pieces can also be detected. Some pots were unearthed in one piece. In terms of metal finds, iron fibula, pieces of bronze bracelets, nails and hobnails, door-rings, bronze and iron spearheads and a high number of various iron chisels etc. have also

[174] Erzen 1970, 502.

been discovered. The high number and variety of whetstones command attention; in my opinion, they reveal how busy the kitchen was.

The fifth layer is 0.95 m thick. A few ceramic fragments, bronze and iron pieces and various bone animals, though rarely, can be seen in the sun dried-mud debris.[175]

The third cross-section, a projection of the previous one and close to the northern hillside, reflects the fact that the second cross-section layers were mixed. he grindstones which are important kitchen utensils are especially noteworthy. The other finds are mostly similar.[176]

The fourth cross section is where scenes of atrocity are depicted. It is in the middle of wide debris layers, 4.00 m long in the east to west direction and 5.25 m deep, reaching the bedrock below. Four main layers can be detected. The skeletons are between the fourth and third.[177] Small finds worth noting include two stone seals, one cylinder seal, a hieroglyph printed bulla piece made from raw clay and bordered with cuneiform script, small ceramic jars, plates of various quality, decorated stone spindles, beads, iron spearheads, various types of bronze arrowheads, etc.[178]

Hammams and Hall

The *selamlık hammam* (Figs. 17, 32) is situated at the eastern end of the main hall through an entrance that is around 1.00 m wide. The door faces the harem *hammam* to the west. The walls up to the pillar level are built from irregular stones and lime mortar; they are quite thick but of varying width. Rising above these are mud-brick walls. The last four pillars in the east support the second floor of the palace. The north and south walls were built between the pillars; each between two. The dimensions of the *hammam* area are 10.00 × 5.00 m. A high base built from large ashlar blocks starts right behind the entrance and extends towards the eastern wall is noteworthy because of a deep hole, situated between the 9.00 × 3.40 m base and the north, south and east walls, reaching the bedrock, and surrounding the high base from three sides. This is conclusive evidence that this was a *hammam*. This approximately 0.70 m-deep hole is filled only with dense ash and coal particles, indicating that there was ember inside. The *hammam* was heated to the desired degree by increasing or decreasing the amount of cinder, and hot water was always ready. The

[175] Erzen 1970, 502.
[176] Erzen 1971, 338.
[177] See n. 113.
[178] Erzen 1972b, 430.

Urartian royal family and the elites and the wealthy certainly used to bathe in first quality ceramic bathroom tubs (tub pieces found in the palace kitchen debris confirm this). The vertical and round vent-holes inside the eastern wall show how advanced was the *hammam* architecture. The well-dressed square and rectangular blocks are 0.60 m thick. As the block surfaces are rough with small pores, the base must have been covered with small carpets. The drainage system connected to the kitchen basin carried away the used water.[179]

In the main hall, 33.00 × 15.00 m (Figs. 17, 31–33), four pillars are placed on each side in rows face to face. The four pillars in front of the *selamlık hammam* are hewn into bedrock. The dimension of these is 1.60 × 2.40 m. The height of the pillars decreases gradually towards the west as a result of the natural formation of the bedrock. To maintain the same height for the hall, the pillar foundations were hewn into existing sections and pillars were built with four-sided lime blocks. These strong pillars supporting the second floor also support the smaller mud-brick pillars that support the covering system of the high ceiling of the upper floor.

In Urartian architecture, pillars were a new support element, first used in the time of Sarduri II (*ca*. 756–730 BC) and then more frequently, especially under Rusa II (*ca*. 685–645 BC). They are structurally the safest means to build multiple-storeyed buildings and support the covering system of wide buildings. The best examples of this support system can be seen in the prominent buildings of Karmir-Blur, Adilcevaz/Kef Kalesi and Ayanis.[180]

The walls of the palace main hall and *hammam*, situated at the same level, are certainly not very high; as evidenced by the heights of these strong pillars. The round and thick beams aligned between the pillars are the wooden elements of the support system. The hall is not actually a sitting area, the *selamlık* and harem halls are located on the second floor.[181] The ground of the main hall is paved with regular flagstones placed on the bedrock with lime mortar (Figs. 31, 33).[182]

The mouth of the first cistern is located 3 m west of the *selamlik hammam* entrance (Figs. 31–34). Its dimensions are 1.55 × 1.80 m. As a result of the unfavourable formation of the bedrock, all four walls are built with limestone

[179] Erzen defines the *hammam* as room no. 1, briefly mentions the channel and ashlar (see Erzen 1966, 506, 508).

[180] Erzen 1988, 8; Çilingiroğlu 2011b, 344, fig. 4.

[181] Defined as the 'Pillared Hall' and 'Hall with Cistern' because of the existing pillars and cisterns: Erzen 1965, 554; 1966, 506; 1967, 471, fig. 6; 1968, 413; 1969, 410; 1970, 501; 1972a, 68; 1988, 7, pl. 8a.

[182] Erzen 1963, 542; 1965, 555.

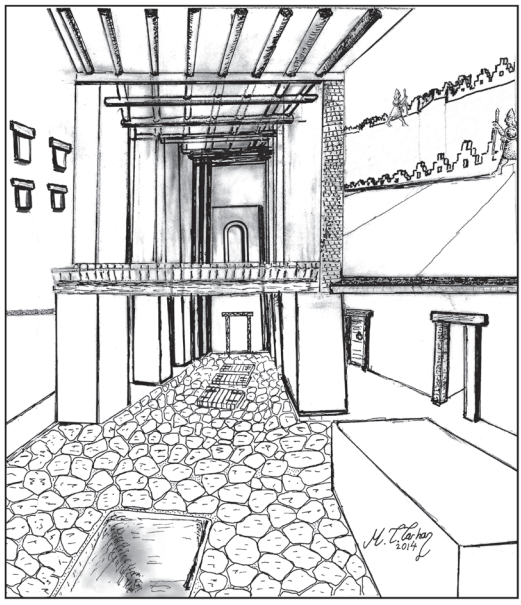

Fig. 33. Reconstruction of the Provincial Palace, inner view from the west (author).

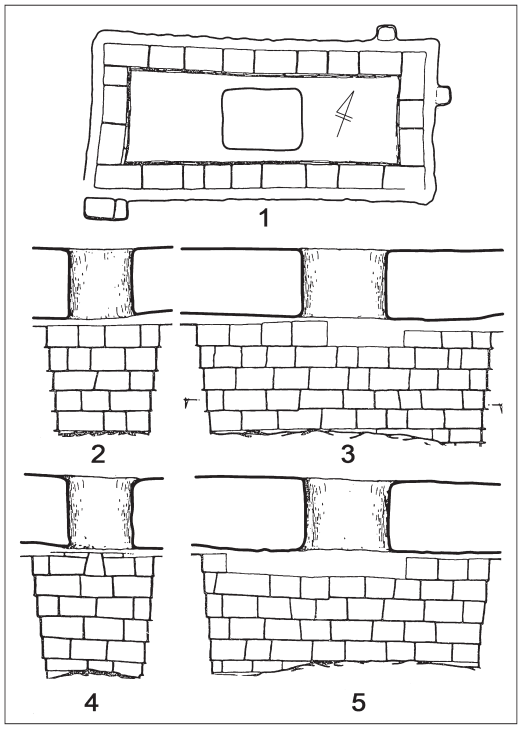

Fig. 34. Cistern no. 1: (1) Plan, (2) Eastern, (3) Southern, (4) Western, (5) Northern sections (after Erzen 1985, pls. 5.2–3, 6.1).

blocks up to the ceiling. Finished blocks in various sizes are placed meticulously in the echelon beds hewn into bedrock, in rows of seven to five and with great mastery. As the bottom has not been reached, the number of rows and hence the original depth of the cistern are unknown. In each row, echelon beds were hewn in a draw-back manner in order to prevent the collapse of the walls. The inverted keystone in the middle of the top row in the western wall reflects how experienced and talented the architects were. Before stones were set in place, unfitted sections were filled with lime mortar and, except for the front faces of the beds and blocks, plastered on all sides. Hence, any possibility of water leakage was prevented. Thickness of the ceiling and the mouth is 0.96 m. Including this thick part, the current depth of the cistern is around 4.50 m; its size is 6.00 × 2.40 m. The drainage system takes water collected on the roof of the second floor into the mouth of the cistern through the south wall and then down to the bedrock base of the *selamlık hammam* via a channel hewn into bedrock. The top of the canal is covered with flagstones; in the hall, the flagstones were left under the paving. This is clear and significant evidence about how the cistern was filled. There are no notable finds in the dense rubble, mud-brick and fire layers except for a few Urartian ceramic fragments.[183]

The second/middle cistern, has a mouth measuring 1.50 × 2.00 m. This is 10 m from the mouth of the first cistern and 5 m from the nearer of the two mouths of the third. As the cistern has not been cleaned, its size and depth are unknown.

The mouth of the third cistern situated in front of the harem *hammam* entrance and down stone steps, is 1.1 × 2.10 m in size. This was built to enter the cistern. Counting the height of the mouth, the cistern's depth is 8.00 m. Like the first cistern, skilled, neat work was undertaken to prevent the water leakage that might result from a wide and deep crevice in the east wall extending from floor to ceiling and natural crevices in the ground. The latter were filled with lime mortar and gravel and the base is wholly paved with flagstones compacted with mortar. The wall crevice was also plastered with lime mortar and built with limestone blocks that were finished to fit its shape. The front faces of the blocks are aligned with the wall. The crevice continues in the ceiling. Rock walls slope in the corners towards the ground. Protrusions were made in the corners at a distance of 2 m from the ceiling. Evidently, a wooden mezzanine floor was placed on them in the shape of a surrounding balcony. Foodstuffs such as meats, cheese, fruit and vegetables, and drinking jugs and supply pots were stored here. Compacted snow, stored during winter, provided a perfect natural cooling system. There were water channels on all sides of the

[183] Erzen 1984, 148, 405, figs. 7–8; 1985, 199, 206–07, pl. 5.2–3, 6.1.

cistern/cold room; they were hewn into bedrock beneath the flagstone paving of the north and south corridors. In places, the natural crevices in the bedrock were used and they were plastered with lime mortar to prevent leakage.[184]

The cistern and both its mouths were filled with mud-brick, rubble, ash, pieces of burnt wood and stone blocks up to the ground level of the hall. Fresco pieces were also unearthed. Skeletal remains of more recent times were found in the destruction layers of the palace and above 1.80 m. They date to the Russian invasion of 1915–17. Animal bones were also unearthed. The 4.50–5.00 m layer contains fine quality, burnished typical Urartian ceramic fragments, also very rare painted and patterned fragments.[185]

While Belck was conducting his research, only two cisterns had open mouths. He regarded this section of the main hall as a sacred building. According to the detailed draft plan drawn by Lehmann-Haupt, these are the first and second cisterns; 12 pillars facing each other were also shown in the plan.[186]

Urartian palaces were inspired by or copied those of the Neo-Assyrian period. Assyrian palaces contain an open space/central courtyard and a second courtyard and symmetry was an important aspect of their architecture. In Urartu, architecture was always planned according to natural topography and there are no strict rules of symmetry. As in Giriktepe Palace, it was realised later that open courtyards were unsuitable for the long, harsh winters. Therefore, closed courtyards were preferred. Our main hall, in the context of a central courtyard, is one of the most beautiful examples.

The heating system and features of the harem *hammam* (Figs. 17, 32, 33) are similar to those of the *selamlık*. There is no east wall, but as in the other, the entrance should be around 1 m wide. The doors were built narrow in order to keep the heat in. The high floor, built from ashlar in the central section and where bath tubs are placed, is smaller: 2.50 × 2.00 m (Fig. 31). These ashlars were removed and used elsewhere during the second settlement. If this high floor had its original dimensions, there would have been insoluble problems: the sections with hot coal that heat the *hammam* and water are so wide that it would have been impossible to enter the *hammam*, let alone reach the high floor and bathe there in almost oven-like heat. We may assume that the heat was set to the right degree. At this point, we face another problem: the high floor area is so small that only a bath tub could fit. How could the servants who assisted palace women and girls to bathe function in this small area? The walls between the second and third pillars situated across from each other and

[184] Erzen 1964, 570; 1968, 415; 1969, 409; 1988, 8, n. 38; Tarhan 2004d, 82, fig. 5.
[185] Erzen 1964, 570; 1968, 415; 1969, 410.
[186] Belck 1893, 79; Lehmann-Haupt 1926, 62, 63 (plan); Erzen 1988, 8, n. 38.

a large part of the east wall are very thin and not uniform, built inattentively. They must date to the second settlement period when, as can be seen in the lower layers of ruins, this area was used as a room.

Based on the original architectural elements of the north-west corner and comparing things with the *selamlık hammam*, it is possible to determine the dimensions of the harem *hammam* as approximately 10 × 6.30 m. A bank, 1.00 × 2.00 m in size and with two high sides, is located in this corner. I believe that bathing and heating pots, clay pots, pumice stones, shower puffs and similar materials used to be kept here (high quality clay was used in bathing and laundry until recently). Well-known metal and lidded *kildanlık* (soap box) of the Seljuks and Ottomans are exhibited at museums. Scouring stones were also found in the layers of ruins.

Adjacent to the harem *hammam*'s west wall and hewn into bedrock is a two-stepped basin of around 1.00 m in diameter (Fig. 32). It is adjacent to the eastern wall, close to its north-eastern corner with a bank of stones extending to it, just underneath the protruding stone gutter coming through from the *hammam*. The top of the 0.50 m-wide gutter passing through the thick walls is closed. On account of the basin and gutter, this place has been referred to by various names such as 'hall with basin-fountain-pool' by Erzen. Water was used here, but unlike the kitchen, there is no drain in the basin. *In-situ* remains of the paving at the bottom of the eastern wall show that the bedrock base is paved with flagstones. I believe it may have been the harem's private kitchen. A large number of cattle and sheep bones, pottery pieces and broken pithoi were found in the debris. Thick layers of debris composed of burnt mud-brick, dense ash and coal pieces reveal that the place was heavily damaged and exposed to severe fire. Small finds unearthed in these layers certainly prove that the western section of the palace was the harem area: 78 beads of a necklace, in a variety of shapes and colours; white, blue and green glass beads of another necklace; various bronze jewellery; embroidered stone buttons; mother-of-pearl laminas; a bone amulet depicting adoration; a first quality stone seal with various animal motifs; pumice stones, etc. In addition, dyestuff in the colour of Urartian blue, an iron Cyprus dagger, bronze and iron arrowheads were also discovered.[187]

The harem toilet is encircled with a round stone wall with a diameter of 3.00 m (Figs. 17, 32, 35), built with mud-mortar and irregular stones. Based on the remains of the flagstone flooring, the entrance was on the west side. In my opinion, the wall dates to the second settlement period. One cannot imagine a wall without foundations in such a special building of Urartu; the architecture should be much more elaborate. It is situated north of the stairway. The

[187] Erzen 1966, 507; 1967, 470.

toilet stone is the first example of the squat of thousands of years ago. The elaborately finished limestone block is 0.50 × 0.50 m in size and its thickness is 0.25 m. The hole in the middle is 0.20 m in diameter and its mouth is widened. The toilet stone is placed on a square-holed pedestal (0.40 × 0.40 × 0.18 m thick) made from hollow limestone. The pedestal is placed on a vent which is 0.45 × 0.45 m in size, built with flat stones and 3.50 m deep. The lower part of the vent gets narrower to connect with the limestone channel blocks. The channel heads north through the filling and discharges into the northern hillside underneath the fortification walls via a canal system in the bedrock.[188]

The features of the north corridor (Figs. 17, 31–33) are similar to those of the south, but along it lie depots, service rooms and rooms for servants. Some of them are interconnected. Doorways had double doors. The shaft bearings of the leaves are hewn into bedrock. Friction and abrasion marks can be seen on the rock base and the sockets. This system was implemented to mitigate the severity of the northern winds. Undoubtedly, some of the rooms opening to the north terrace also had double-leaf doors (though, since the north walls are missing, there is no evidence). The north terrace is also an alure used for defensive purposes. Some of the *in-situ* remains indicate that the ground was paved with flagstones.[189]

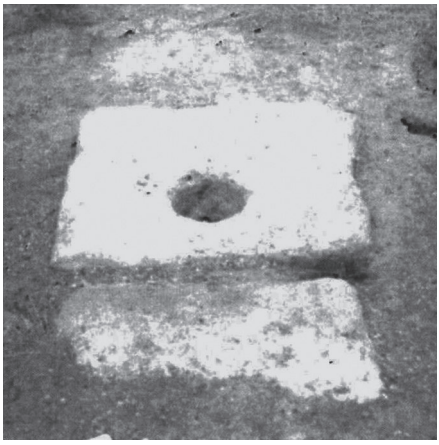

Fig. 35. Toilet stone (author's archive).

[188] Erzen 1968, 418.
[189] Erzen 1965, 555; 1966, 507; 1967, 471; 1968, 416; 1971, 337.

Royal Storehouses and Depots

There are huge storehouses and depot buildings between the monumental entrance building that house the Irmushini temple and the temple of the King's Cult, meaning that Sardurihinili was also an important economic centre. This site consists of two large adjacent storehouses built on the north to south axis, perpendicular to the main axis of the Lower Fortress (Figs. 3, 8.21, 17, 36–37). A hundred large pithoi were found in these storehouses and depots. The average height of the pithoi at Çavuştepe is 1.90 m, while their bodies are 1.40 m and they are 0.04 m thick. The large storehouse was previously built on wooden columns on stone bases, and then was divided into two halls, each measuring 23–23.5 × 7 m, by a wall 1.50 m in thickness; the wooden columns were removed during extensions and alterations in the 7th century BC. The pithoi, aligned in regular rows along the axis of the storehouse, four in the east and three in the west hall, were embedded in the ground with their bodies remaining above ground. These are the largest supply depots found in an Urartian fortress. Besides inscriptions in cuneiform, stating their capacity, most have designs on their shoulders defined as hieroglyphs. Thirty-two pieces of pithoi in cuneiform and partly hieroglyph have provided much information about storage.[190] How many *aqarqi* of wine, beer, sesame oil, etc., and how many *kapi* of wheat, barley, lentils, etc. they could hold is written. Aside from this, 76,903 *kapi* (more than 2000 tons) in total are written on eight sandstone inscriptions, including the inscription in the Pergamon Museum in Berlin, found *in situ* in depots or elsewhere in Sardurihinili. They are explained as follows: 'The Noble God Haldi and Sarduri, son of Argishti, had this grain depot built. There is xxx *kapi* (capacity here)'.[191] Given the total volume of the depots in Sardurihinili, it is confirmed that this place was the 'economic centre'.

Remains of charred straw, wheat and barley were found underneath some of the pithoi. These remains also indicate how the grain was preserved: a layer of straw laid at the bottom and on the sides of the pithos prevented humidity and any contact of the grain with the inner side, in a sense providing ventilation. This tradition still continues in many villages of Anatolia. In some others, instead of straw, knitted thin ropes were found.[192] I believe that they must have been used for the same purpose.

[190] Erzen 1975, 559; 1976, 712; 1977, 622; 1979b, 251; 1981, 39, figs. 1–2; 1988, 8–9, n. 60, pl. 9a.

[191] Dinçol 1974, 105–09, 113, nos. 1, 3; 1987, 96–102, nos. 1–7; Payne 2006, 243–47, nos. 9.2.8–15, figs. 102–108. For capacity markings on the large pithoi, see Payne 2006, nos. 14.3.7–14.3.26; for liquid measuring units *aqarqi*/*tirasi*/*arasi*, see Salvini 2006, 218.

[192] Erzen 1975, 560; 1976, 712.

Fig. 36. Royal grand depot, from the north (author's archive).

It is understood that inside a large pithos some first quality glossy-slip pots were kept: five tall, large cups, and 16 trefoil-mouthed handled jugs in various sizes. Capacity marks were put on the lower parts of the handles by scraping the surface after firing and finishing. These are measuring pots. Burnt pieces of knotted ropes are found with them; in my opinion, these were placed between the pots that were put in the pithoi on top of each other, also on the sides of the pithoi, to prevent damage and breakage of the pots. The depots were partly destroyed during the Scythian attacks and were used as rooms during the second settlement phase.[193]

Large depots, workshops and service buildings are located east of these buildings, on an east–west axis: thick-walled buildings sitting on foundations, their rooms interconnecting, their floors made of well-finished bedrock. The spindle whorls, bone weaving tools, needles, awls, etc. unearthed in several rooms clearly indicate that these were workshops. Large supply pithoi are situated in large depots. In some, remains of charred grain can be seen.[194]

[193] Erzen 1975, 560; 1976, 712; 1979b, 51, figs. 3–4.
[194] Erzen 1969, 403; 1976, 713; 1977b, 622; 1981, 40; 1987, 307–09, 318–19, figs. 16–18, 320–21, figs. 20–23.

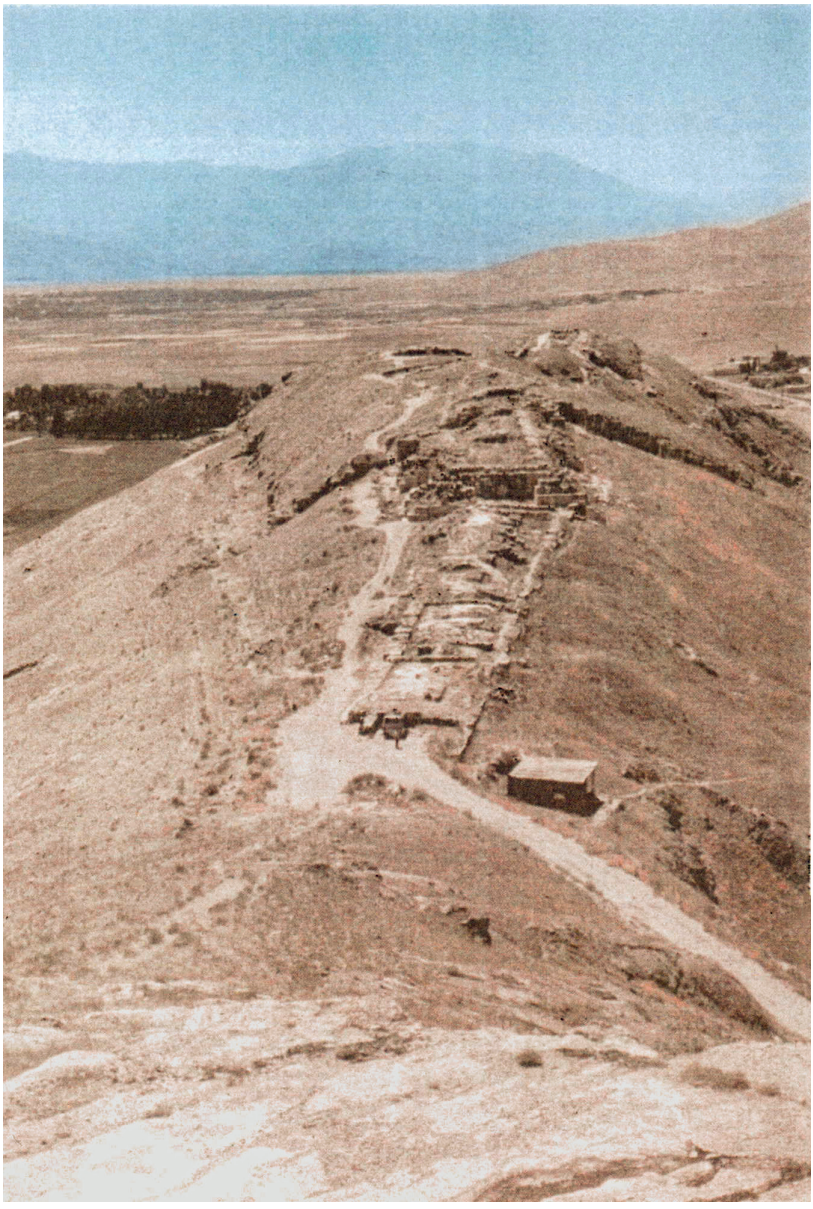

Fig. 37. Looking from the Upper Fortress to the Lower Fortress: from the east to the west, fortified road, double-sloped road, front buildings, the temple of the King's Cult-Uç Kale, eastern walls of the Lower Fortress, royal storehouses and depots, Irmushini temple, Provincial Palace; on the left below, Çavuştepe village and Gürpınar plain (author's archive).

One child and ten adult burials were found dating back to the second settlement period, but no grave-goods.[195]

Aside from the small finds of ceramic fragments found in dense destruction and fire layers, basalt shallow and wide dishes used in grinding, double-handled mugs and a fragment of a Scythian horse-trapping made of antler are noteworthy.[196]

The Barracks Road continues from the junction with the double-sloped road along the south of the temple of the King's Cult and then heads west, towards the Entrance Tower. Terraces were built on the southern hillside of this area in the 7th century BC. Thus, the necessary large areas were obtained. The strong filling system behind the terrace walls supports the buildings above all the way from east to west. High terrace walls provided the possibility of phased defence. Walls were built using lime mortar and stones in various sizes. Connecting roads passing through the terraces have been detected.[197]

The grand steps are located south-west of the Lower Fortress, on the right-hand side just before reaching the tower. This gigantic stepped area (30 × 9 m) lies in a north–south direction. Steps are adjacent to the body of the fortification wall. The heights, widths and lengths of the steps and connecting landings are very different from one another and nothing like it has been found elsewhere. It is certainly not a stairway. Steps were placed into sockets opening to the inclined bedrock with great care and expertise. Large stones were used at the bottom. Lime mortar and rubble stones were used for filling the spaces. Small stones were used in the rubble masonry of the surface. Flagstones were placed on top of that. The steps and landings undoubtedly supported the body of the fortification wall. According to Erzen, even though simple materials were used in construction, the impressive appearance should be regarded as a success for Urartian architecture. Therefore it has been named 'Monumental Steps'. Initially, while the entrance gate of the Lower Fortress was being investigated, it was interpreted as a stairway building and, in line with the phased defence mentioned above, it was thought to have a military purpose. In addition, it was assumed to have been used in official ceremonies.[198] Since the Barracks road passed directly in front of it, it is possible that army farewell and welcome ceremonies were conducted here.

[195] Erzen 1984, 150, pl. 412.20; 1985, 199, 205, pl. 4.3, 206, pl. 5.1; 1987, 308.
[196] Erzen 1976, 713; 1985, 199; 1987, 308, 319, fig. 19, 322–23, figs. 24–28.
[197] Erzen 1968, 413; 1975, 558.
[198] Erzen 1962, 624; 1963, 541; 1964, 569; 1965, 554; 1966, 503; 1975, 558.

Entrance Tower, Barracks Road, Barracks, Stable

What Erzen called the South Tower is situated outside the fortification walls and close to the south-east corner of the Lower Fortress (Figs. 3, 7, 8.24, 17). The tower's dimensions are approximately 10 × 10 m. It is understood that it rose on a very solid stone foundation and, evidenced by the ruins, the inside was partly filled and its mud-brick walls were very thick. The distance between the north wall and the body of the fortification wall was planned to be a 6 m-wide passage. The road paved with wide and thick flagstones dates back to the 8th century BC and from the platform where the double slopes meet, it runs through this passage and extends towards the west.[199]

This tower was certainly built for entry/exit since the Lower Fortress has no gates. In my opinion, like in the natural rock cleft in the north-west of the palace, there was a mechanical system resembling a lift. The wooden construction connecting the fortress and the tower is formed of a wooden platform in the upper part placed on thick supporting planks which rest on the body of the tower and the body of the fortification wall. Therefore, for stability, the tower was built partially with a filling system and with very thick walls in order to carry this weight without any problem. The dense layer of ash and iron nails on the road below belong to the wooden construction.

The question of why the road continues towards the west is answered by 'barracks and stabling', with the road as solid evidence for their location. It is impossible for the garrison to be inside the fortress; the most appropriate place, for all aspects, was to the west – in a fortified area between the southern and northern fortification walls. Hence I label this road the Barracks Road (Figs. 7, 8.23, 17).

The width of the road supported by sustaining walls varies between 4.90 and 6.30 m in line with the topography. Those walls are between 0.80 and 1.20 m high. The road passes by the hillsides of the fortification walls, in parallel to the southern and second fortification walls. The bastions protruding by 1.00 m from the fortification wall that is aligned to the royal storehouses and depots are 3.50 m, 3.60 m and 3.70 m wide; the curtain widths are 5.10 m, 6.65 m and 6.70 m. Buttresses can also be detected. They could remain intact on the mud-brick section of the stone body to reach a height of 4.00 m in some places.[200]

[199] Erzen 1966, 413; 1968, 413; 1975, 558.

[200] Erzen 1972b, 427; 1974, 548; 1975, 558; 1983, 159; 1984, 149, 406–07, figs. 10–16, 408–10, plans and sections 1–6.

Small finds comprise a sandstone depot inscription, unbaked clay tablet pieces and many iron nails (as mentioned before), plus numerous bronze and iron arrow- and spearheads, a bronze sword-hilt, Scythian horse-trapping fragments of antler, a stone seal and a cylinder seal, first quality burnished ceramic fragments, etc. found in the collapse and dense fire layers, particularly in areas close to the tower.[201]

Due to the fact that Sardurihinili was a privileged provincial centre, the garrison cavalry, chariots, logistical support vehicles and the infantry constituting its strong military power were ready at all times. As these buildings and the Barracks Road were situated to the south, below the Lower Fortress, they were protected well from severe winter winds coming from the north (Figs. 3, 8.25, 17).

In terms of stone masonry workmanship, the second fortification wall built with bastions and curtains is of lower quality than the southern fortification wall. Aside from the fillings and paving of the areas between the two walls, large constructions between the thick support walls of the southern fortification wall in a north–south direction are noteworthy. The first large building is approximately 18 × 100 m. Gravel is laid on bedrock levels, stone filling is made with lime mortar and the ground is paved with flagstones. These long and large places are connected with each other. Adjacent to the stone paving is the mouth of a channel. 0.30 × 0.25 m, to drain snow and rainwater leaking into the area between the two retaining walls, it is said.[202] But the channel was used when cleaning the stables. Chariots, logistical support vehicles and technical staff responsible for their maintenance were in one section of this building; the horses and their grooms in another.

The barracks building in the second area is approximately 70 × 20 m in size (Figs. 3, 8, 17). Thick rubble masonry is built with more than a dozen rows of mud-brick blocks on top of the bottom filling in the first building and the floor is covered with paving blocks.[203] With such a filling system, it is impossible for the soldiers living and sleeping here to have been adversely affected by the cold and damp. This is another proof of how much importance was given to their health.

[201] Erzen 1968, 413; 1974, 548; 1978b, 539.

[202] Erzen 1983, 159, 163, fig. 5; 1984, 149, 406–07, figs. 10–16; 1985, 200, 208, pl. 7.1–3, 209–11, pls. 8.1–2 (plans and front view of the walls), 9/1–3, 10/1–3; 1987, 309, 324–27, figs. 30–37.

[203] Erzen 1984, 149, 409–10, plans 3–6 and sections of mud-brick filling and pavement.

The Front Buildings of the 7th Century BC in front of the Temple of the King's Cult

At the end of the 8th century BC, the empty area to the east of the temple had to be settled as there was no area left in the Lower Fortress for construction of new buildings to match an increasing need. This area stretches from the temple wall towards the east to the neck that connects the two hills and meets the double-sloped road. The natural form of the bedrock declines gradually in this direction as well. Its northern and southern sections, on the other hand, are sloped and steep hillsides are observed. The building of the annexes was carried out in the 7th century BC in two phases. Phase IA covers the first half of this century, IB the second. In Phase IA the first building with five rooms was built with the stepped terracing technique in an area of 55.00 × 12.50 m. The thick foundation stones were placed on foundations hewn into bedrock. The second building, constructed in Phase IB, has seven rooms. The walls are thinner. The rooms in both buildings following the slope and stepping towards the east. By this way lighting was provided: the windows face east. Both buildings and the rooms inside are believed to be interconnected (Figs. 8.22, 37–39).

The north wall of the first building is also a strong fortification wall built with bastions and curtains. These architectural elements cannot be detected on the wall of the second building. It is supported with sustaining walls. The rooms in the second building are narrower to the east. The Main Gate is located at the south-east corner of Place XII. After the gate, the wall meets the fortification system of the fortified road, the sacred rock platform and the Upper Fortress. Evidently, the development and expansion was so great that the two fortresses were connected in the 7th century BC and the buildings were taken under protection with this fortification system (Figs. 38C, 39A–C).

Parts of the stonework on the thick south wall of the first building are made from limestone 'rustic' blocks, proving that these buildings date to the 7th century BC. The best examples of the rustication technique can be seen in Rusahinili/Toprakkale, the second centre of governance built during the reign of Rusa II (*ca.* 685–645 BC), in Adilcevaz/Kef Kalesi and in the prominent buildings and fortification walls in Ayanis. Rectangular, fortified civil buildings with many rooms and surrounding walls bearing bastions and curtains, as seen at Çermik staging post near Sardurihinili, are another feature of Rusa II's time. The buildings constructed, of necessity, in front of the magnificent temple, contrast poorly with it and are overshadowed by it.[204]

[204] Erzen 1969, 403; 1977, 19, pl. 12.3, Toprakkale; 1979b, 252–58, pls. 154–155, figs. 8–11, pl. 156, fig. 15; 1988, 13, 15–16, 20–21, 28, 30, 36–37, 39–41; figs. 4, 7, 12, 14, 20, 22, pls. 11a–b, 12a–c, 13a–b, 14a–c, 15a–c, 16a–c, 24b–d; Tarhan 2004d, 83.

Phase IA (Fig. 38A–C)

Place I is situated adjacent to the eastern wall of the temple and between the two bastions. Its entrance opens into place II. No walls were built in front of the curtain. The buildings were damaged and destroyed by the severe fires, stone blocks cracked because of high heat, fell apart and were badly damaged (Fig. 24). Dimensions: 6.00 × 3.30 m. A burnt ceiling beam provides information about the covering system. The stone body of the curtain is 5.20 m high. Evidently, one end of the wooden beams aligned to an east–west axis is placed on the stone body and inside the socket opening to the mud-brick section.[205]

Place II measures 9.20 × 4.00 m. The mud-brick walls were affected by fire to a great extent; as a result, they turned dark red. The ground is paved with fine flagstones. There is a furnace opening into the ground and adjacent to the west wall.[206] This is a corridor that allows entry to the first building with its door opening to the south.

Place III is a large hall with dimensions of 19.00 × 9.40 m. Four pillars placed at the centre support the ceiling. The dimensions of the pillars vary from east to west: 1.60 × 1.80 m, 1.70 × 1.80 m, 1.80 × 1.90 m and 1.60 × 1.60 m. They are aligned, spaced at an average of 2.00 m from one another. Their lower sections are covered with simply finished, cubic or rectangular prismatic sand stone pieces. They rise on the bedrock. However, because of the slope, their heights below ground level differ. The ground of hall's southern section is hewn out of bedrock and is at the same level as that of Place II. It is paved with flagstone plates. A significant portion of the south wall is hewn out of bedrock whose height reaches 1.00–1.30 m. The ground of the northern section is, on the other hand, made from wood. As the bedrock has a steep slope, the large area in between, bordered by the northern foundation wall was partially filled and a basement approximately 2.00 m high was formed. In my opinion, various objects made in the workshops, the raw materials and tools were stored in this area. The wooden paving of the ground surface is the ceiling of the basement. The renovation shows that the place was used during the period of the second settlement.[207]

Place IV is similar to Place III. This is a large hall: 16.50 × 9.00 m. Two very large rectangular pillars are placed at its centre. Their dimensions are 3.00 × 2.10 m and they are spaced 4.50 m from each other. When the hall

[205] Erzen 1969, 404; 1988, 4–5, 16–17, 26, figs. 4, 14, pl. 13a–b.
[206] Erzen 1988, 4–5, 17–18, figs. 4–5, 7, 14, 20, pls. 13a–b, 17a–b, 18a–b, 19a.
[207] Erzen 1988, 18, 20, figs. 4, 6, 7, 20, 22, pls. 17b, 19a–b, 20a–c, 21a–b.

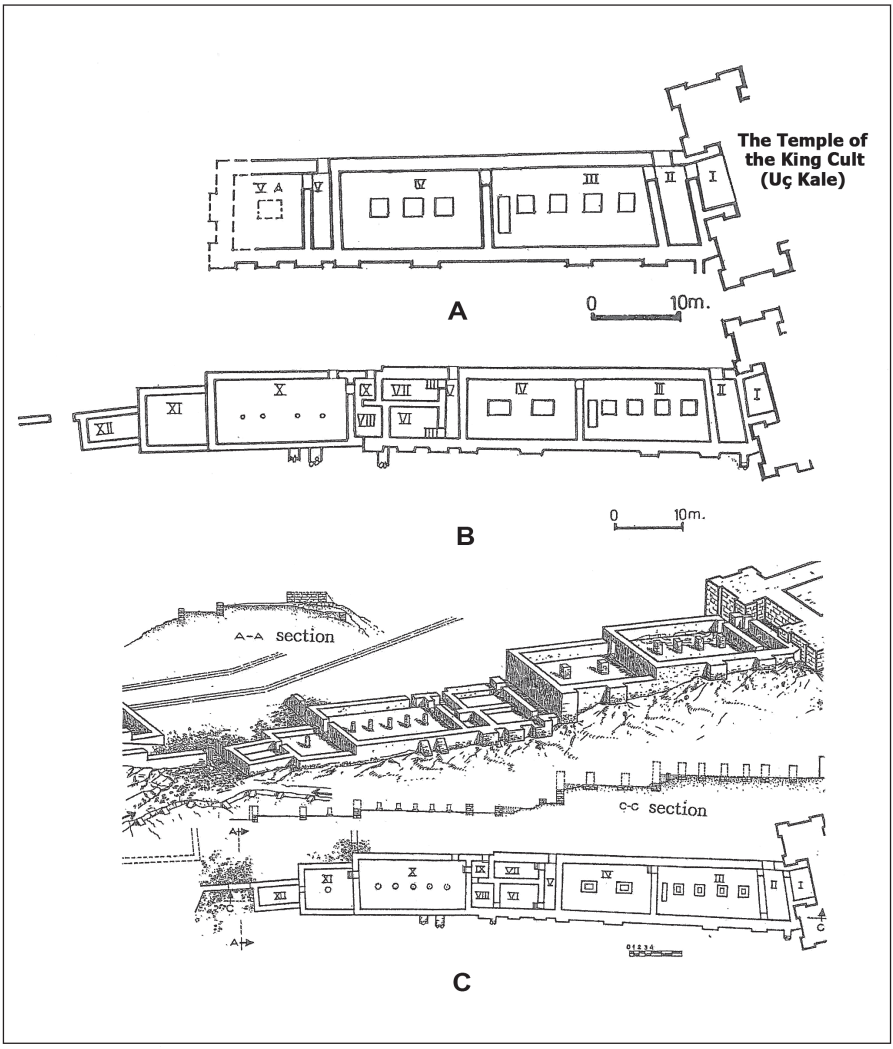

Fig. 38. A–B. Plans of the front buildings for phases IA and IB; C. Axonometric plan of the front buildings, on the left double-sloped road, courtyard and Main Gate, fortified road to the Upper Fortress and terrace walls to the south. Section and plan of the buildings (adapted by author from Erzen 1988, figs. 4, 12, 14).

was built it contained three pillars, but during later renovation both end pillars were widened and the one at the centre was removed. The floor is paved with flagstones. Due to the level difference, the hall is entered from Place III via a stone-stepped ladder.[208]

Place V is a corridor resembling Place II, located in a north–south direction with dimensions of 2.00 × 8.70 m. Its doorway is 1.10 m wide and situated on the southern wall allows entry to the building. As a result of the level difference with the connecting Place IV, a section of the western wall was hewn vertically into bed rock. The ground was wholly carved out of bed rock.[209]

It is suggested that Sardurihinili was affected by a disastrous earthquake in the first half of the 7th century BC. The stepped sustained walls built later in front of the fortification walls are shown as evidence.[210]

Phase IB (Fig. 38B–C)

Evidently, new and widespread building activity was undertaken in the second half of the 7th century BC as the Phase IA places were no longer sufficient to accommodate the continuous development and growth of the fortress. This phase reflects and records the latest architectural development of Sardurihinili in the Urartian period. The small finds reveal, in particular, that the Urartians continued their relations with neighbouring states and the outside world until the sudden collapse of Urartu as a result of the Scythian attacks. The building adjacent to the first building of Phase IA is narrower to the east; its dimensions are 55 × 11 m. During the major renovation in this phase, Places VI and VII were situated inside the hall VA of Phase IA. There are differences between walls of the two period in terms of technique, craftsmanship and building materials. The main walls of Phase IB phase are narrower (1.10 m) and built from large stones in cyclopean pattern in places and flat sandstone blocks. The northern wall does not have a protrusion. Only the two strong stepped retaining walls in the northern wall of Place X were built later.[211]

Place VI, with dimensions of 7.10 × 4.50 m, was built during the renovation mentioned above. Because of the level difference, it is entered from Place V passage via stone steps at the door in the north-east corner. The doorway is 1.20 m wide. The place was devastated as a result of a severe fire. Two trefoil-mouthed, handled, bright red burnished small pitchers, a plate, a

[208] Erzen 1988, 20–21, figs. 4, 7–8, 10, 20.
[209] Erzen 1988, 21–22, figs. 4, 7, 11–12.
[210] Erzen 1988, 41, pls. 43b–c, 44a–b.
[211] Erzen 1988, 26–27, fig. 14 plan, pls. 25a–c, 26a–d, 27b.

stone spindle, Scythian horse-trapping fragments of antler and iron knives were unearthed inside the place.[212]

Place VII is situated together with Place VI in hall VA. Its dimensions are 8.30 × 3.00 m. It has similar features. It is entered through a door in the south-west corner via stone steps. The ground is paved with fine flagstones. Like other places, it survived a severe fire. There are tone and terracotta spindles. A cylindrical seal matrix of red porphyry and a cylindrical stamp seal of black stone are very interesting, for they give new information on Urartian glyptic.[213]

Place VIII is partially from Phase IA together with Place IX; situated between the north and south walls. Its dimensions are 4.20 × 4.50 m. It is connected to Place IX through a doorway 1.10 m wide situated in the south-east corner. These places are located 1 m lower due to level difference. The ground is compressed soil paved over finished bedrock. The place was exposed to a severe fire just like the others. A large quantity of carbonised cereal grains and sooty black kitchen wares were obtained here.[214]

Place IX is 3.00 × 3.00 m in size. The floor of the place, consisted of pressed grit with red clay. The room leads to the outside via a doorway, 1.10 m wide, in the south-west corner. A second doorway of the same width in the east wall leads to Place X. A stepped goblet, a bone implement and sherds of unidentifiable profile were obtained here.[215]

Place X is the largest room of either phase. The walls measure 9.10 m (west), 9.40 m (east), 19.60 m (north) and 20.10 m (south). In the middle are three *in-situ* sandstone bases for wooden pillars, lying in an east–west direction. The bases which might have been five, were originally placed *ca*. 2.50 m from each other. They are 0.60 m in diameter. The ground was covered with paving slabs placed on a thin sand layer. There are two entrance doors, each *ca*. 1.00 m wide, one at the south-west corner opens to the outside, the other in the west wall opens to Place IX. A doorway in the east wall descends to Place XI, by a wooden staircase. Here provided three stone spindles, an alabaster loom-weight, four bone implement pieces of a loom and a typical double ritual vase. Last is the rolled tab-type handle of a terracotta vase.[216]

Place XI is 9.00 × 7.70 m. A gateway with a wooden staircase was at the south-west corner, and a door on the east wall opens to Place XII. A wooden pillar might have been set in the middle. The floor surface is covered with stone slabs. A fluted bronze bowl (phiale) was obtained on the floor. Bone

[212] Erzen 1988, 27, 43, figs. 37.1–2, 42.2, pls. 35g, 42a–c, pl. 47d.
[213] Erzen 1979b, 257, pl. 157.16; 1988, 27–28, 36, fig. 23.1–2, 5, pls. 35b–e, 38a–b.
[214] Erzen 1988, 28, pl. 37c, 38, figs. 25–26, pl. 37a–b.
[215] Erzen 1988, 13, 28, 37, 40, pls. 27b–c, 36a, 40d, figs. 24.5, 34.
[216] Erzen 1988, 28–30, 34, 36, 33–34, 37, figs. 15–17, 23.3, 6, 24.1–4, pls. 35c, n, 36f–i.

implements have been found here. A black porphyry green-veined plate differs from the basalt plates with its bright burnish, imitating a metal vessel. This plate, which has an outward rim with flutes below and a round bottom, is of the same date as the stone plates at Toprakkale and Karmir-Blur, i.e. the second half of 7th century.[217]

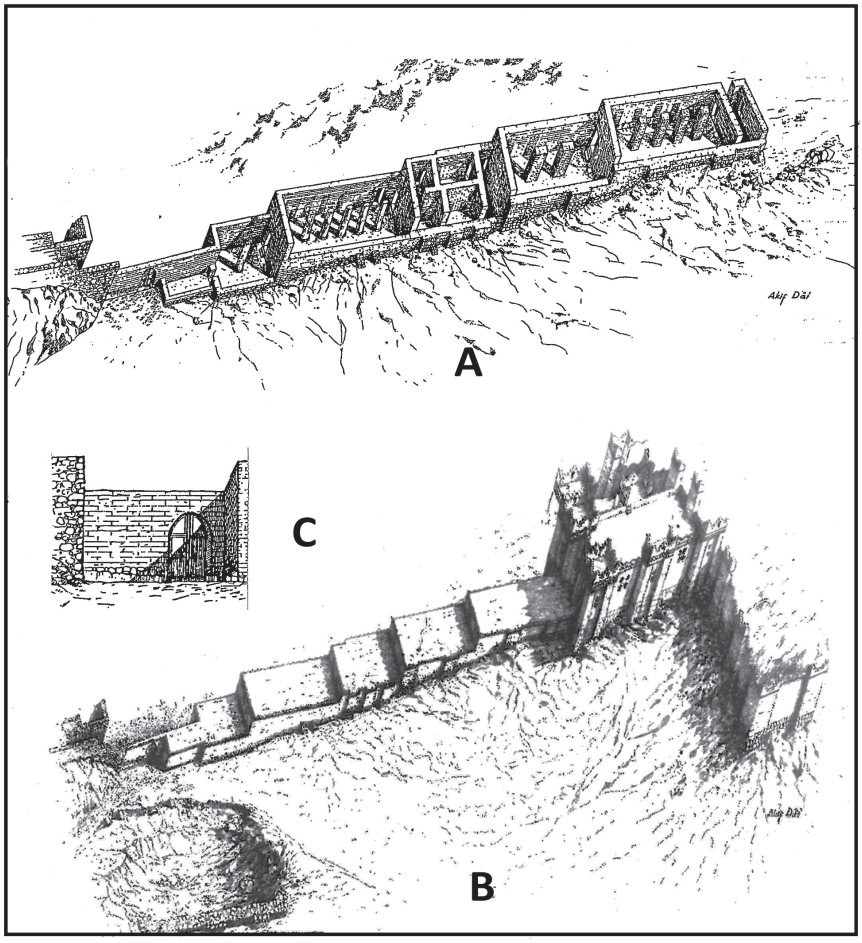

Fig. 39. A. Axonometric plan of the front buildings: Main Gate and fortified road on the left; B. Reconstruction of the front buildings and Uç Kale (drawing by A. Dai; after Erzen 1988, figs. 7, 20, 22).

[217] Erzen 1988, 30–31, 37–39, figs. 24.6–9, 27, 30, pls. 36b–e, 38c, 39d.

Place XII has a long and narrow almost rectangular plan, 7.70 m (south), 7.50 m (north), 3.30 m (east). It is not on the main east–west axis of the buildings but deviates slightly to the north. The calcareous blocks, used in the south and the east walls in elaborate craftsmanship, draw attention. The Main Gate is situated at the south-eastern end of Place XII. This place had been used as a gate tower, but was no higher than the gate.[218]

Let us make use of these finds to determine the functions of the places. The spindles found in Places VI, VII, X, and the loom-weight, bone implement pieces of a loom obtained in the Place X, and the especially high number of bone implements in Place XI indicate that these places were, with great probability, workshops of weavers, wool-producers and leather goods producers. Cereal grains and sooty black wares obtained in Place VIII demonstrate the presence of a kitchen.[219]

A detailed analysis of the small finds discovered here and at the fortress indicates that there were relations with North Mesopotamia, north-western Iran, the Caucasus and Anatolia at various times in the 7th century BC. Probably, relations with the world outside the borders of Urartian hegemony continued until the end of the 7th century BC.[220]

The Staging-Post Building at Çermik (Fig. 40)

This is located to the north-west of the fortress and within its sight. It is on the Van–Hakkâri highway that follows the historical military road extending from Tushpa to the sacred city of Musasir. It is located 15 m north of the road, approximately 500 m west of the Çavuştepe village crossroads. The building stretches in an east–west direction with dimensions of 35.00 × 16.00 m. The main foundation surrounding the building is built from large stones and is approximately 1.10 m thick. The corners and the long northern and southern walls, except for the south-eastern corner, were fortified with projections. The three-stepped protrusion in the south-east corner must have been both a supporting wall and also an architectural element used for climbing up to the roof. The projections are 1.60 m wide; the protrusions are 0.40 m. The place housing various furnaces and counters is the kitchen and its floor is paved with sand stones. The pithoi pedestals adjacent to kitchen and buried underground

[218] Erzen 1988, 31, pl. 29a.
[219] Erzen 1988, 33–34.
[220] Erzen 1979b, 255–58, pls. 156.13–14, 157.16–18. For detailed information, see Erzen 1988, 35–43.

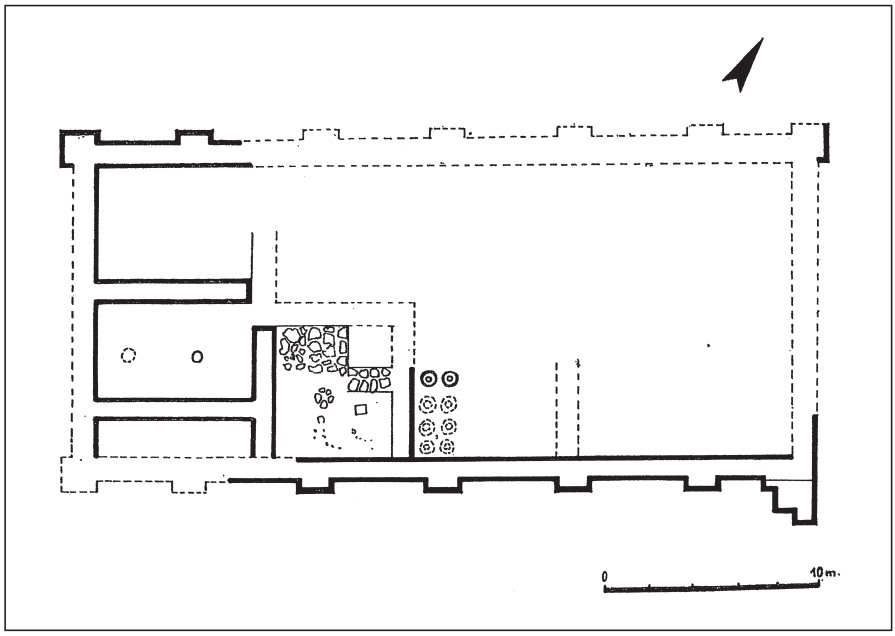

Fig. 40. Plan of the staging-post building at Çermik (after Erzen 1988, fig. 13).

are supply depots. The place at the centre of which are located two wooden columns with stone pedestals must be the living room. Various types and qualities of ceramic fragments were found in these places, mostly of second quality kitchen pots. First quality burnished fragments in Urartian red are very rare. Grindstones and whetstones were also found.[221]

A skeleton found on the stone paving in the middle of the building is noteworthy: the bones are scattered around but the skull could not be found. A large iron spearhead with spiked butt in the shape of a flat willow leaf was also unearthed at this very same spot. An intramural burial is not plausible for a building such as this; the presence of the spearhead suggests a murder.[222]

A natural water source with a rather large mouth is located on the hillside to the north of the building. Typical ceramic fragments were unearthed at a depth of 2.00 m, in the deepest part of the water source. Pieces of pots dating from the Middle Ages to recent times can be found. Votive lamps, in particular, draw attention. Situated right by the water source is a tomb revered by the villagers as that of a saint. This is still a place of pilgrimage and votive offer-

[221] Erzen 1971, 339; 1979b, 255, pl. 155.12 plan; 1988, 25, fig. 13 plan, pl. 23a–c.
[222] Erzen 1971, 339.

ings.[223] Çermik is a very common name for a hot water source in the local language; the water source here was made sacred. Probably, in earlier times, hot water boiled out here.

As mentioned above, buildings of long and rectangular plan are first seen during the time of Rusa II (*ca.* 685–645 BC).[224] Such buildings and places were new works of Urartian architecture. The staging-post building is a typical example. However, fortified staging posts had also been built on main roads in regions under Urartian hegemony before the 7th century BC. Those constructed on the road, 'the oldest high-way', between Van and Elazığ are the best examples.[225] I would suggest that these Urartian staging posts were the first and preliminary examples of the caravanserais of later times.

SARDURIHINILI'S FATE

As we have seen in detail, the fortress was damaged and looted during the Scythian attacks in the last quarter of the 7th century BC. This sudden invasion was the beginning of the end. Traces of the severe fire and damage layers can be seen everywhere inside and outside the fortress.[226] The various arrow- and spearheads, horse-trapping fragments, etc. unearthed in these layers are definite pieces of archaeological evidence. [227]

The final Urartian-period settlement was a simple village, symbolising poverty, observed during the short period between the end of the 7th century BC and the beginning of the 6th century BC, before final Median invasions. This small settlement, built on the damage and fire layers caused by the Scythians, was destroyed by the Medes.[228] The fortress fell quiet. Following the Medes came the Achaemenids (from the last quarter of the 6th century BC). The fortress no longer had strategic importance, only the metal workshop in the Upper Fortress is noteworthy. This period also ended with a severe fire.[229]

The Upper Fortress was resettled in the Middle Ages. Settlement between the 12th and 14th centuries was in the form of a village. This was destroyed as a result of a severe fire and Çavuştepe Fortress was then abandoned completely. The end of a chain of Anatolian civilisations (Fig. 41).

[223] Erzen 1971, 340.
[224] Erzen 1979b, 255; 1988, 24–26 – for similar buildings see. n. 102.
[225] Sevin 1988, esp. figs. 1 (map) and 2 (plan of the staging post at Bahçecik). For detailed information, see Sevin 1989.
[226] Erzen 1972a, 69; 1978, 59; 1979b, 60; 1988, 45–46.
[227] Erzen 1979b, 259, fig. 10; 1988, 46–50, figs. 39–42, pls. 45–47.
[228] Erzen 1988, 51–54.
[229] Erzen 1983, 157.

Fig. 41. Lower Fortress from the north; from east to the west, the temple of the King's Cult, northern walls, Irmushini temple, Provincial Palace, and close to its end, natural rock cleft (author's archive).

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EREBUNI (ARIN-BERD)

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Abstract

The fortress of Erebuni, located on the outskirts of modern Yerevan, represents one of the more significant sites of partly Urartian date to have been a focus of archaeological activity through a good part of the past 65 years. Founded in the early 8th century BC by Argishti I, Erebuni provides many reflections of the cultural achievements of Urartu, especially in the 8th and 7th centuries BC. Recent architectural studies of previously excavated remains – excavated in the 1950s – also suggest that the site may have been subject to an important, hitherto unrecognised period of Median-influenced control, not least in the first half of the 6th century BC. And finally, while it is now generally agreed that no monumental construction took place at Erebuni after 550 BC, the accidental discovery of a hoard of silver vessels near the base of the Rock of Erebuni can be said to underscore the outstanding skills of the metalsmiths of Armenia in Achaemenid times.

INTRODUCTION

The imposing site of Erebuni (Arin-Berd) stands at the north-eastern end of the fertile Ararat plain at 40° 08' N and 44° 52' E, near the south-eastern limit of the modern city of Yerevan, the capital of the republic of Armenia. Composed of several distinct elements, the site includes a long-lived fortress situated on the flattened top and upper slopes of a triangular, 60 m-high rock outcrop (Fig. 1); an Urartian extramural settlement that stands on a prominent ridge 150 m to the south-east of the citadel; an Urartian cemetery located on the plain to the south-west of the citadel;[1] and traces of numerous early structures in the plain to the north and to the north-east of the citadel that have chanced to come to light during building operations in the present-day Vardashen district of Yerevan. Indeed, it would come as no surprise if the site as a whole once occupied an area of more than 100 ha.

[1] In an area that is currently part of the Nor Aresh suburb of Yerevan.

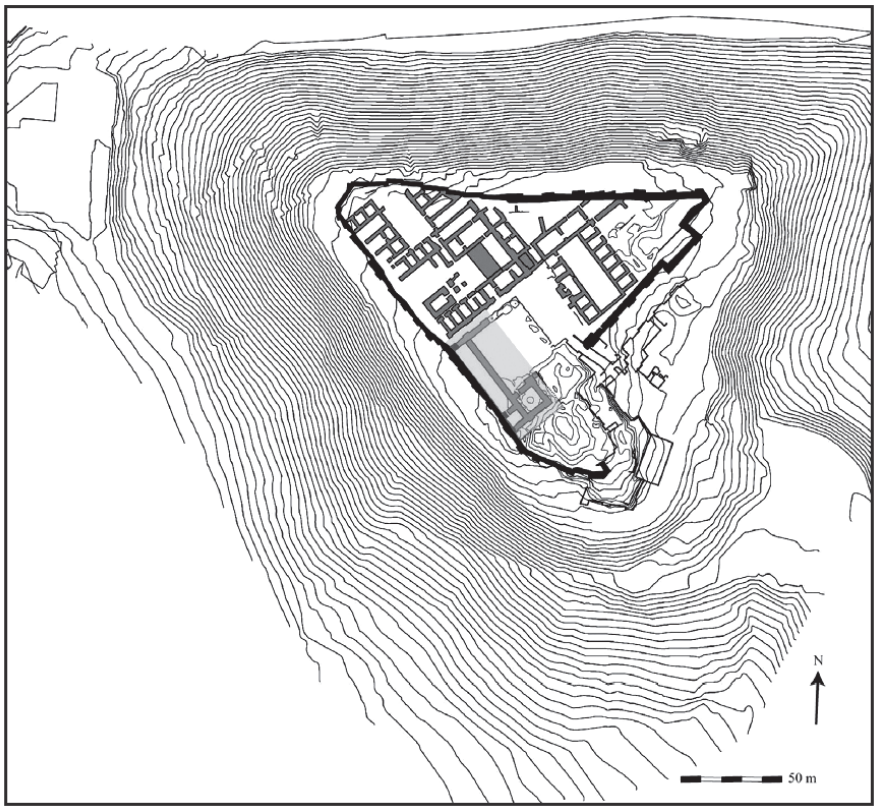

Fig. 1. Erebuni. The shaded portion of the plan indicates the area within which most of the more recent excavations took place between 2008 and 2016 (after Deschamps 2016, fig. 4).

The early history of Erebuni is well documented. The annals of Argishti I (786–764 BC), written in Urartian cuneiform on the Rock of Van in Argishti's fifth regnal year, i.e. in 782 BC,[2] and better preserved in a duplicate of the annals on a stele from the Church of Surp Sahak (also in Van), include the following passage:

[2] We follow here the generally accepted chronology for the regnal years of Argishti son of Minua, suggested by G.A. Melikishvili, accepted by B.B. Piotrovsky and N.V. Harutyunyan, and based on a reconstruction of Argishti's annals when correlated with relevant Assyrian texts. However, I.M. Diakonoff argued extensively in favour of considering 780 BC as the first regnal year of Argishti, which would date the founding of Erebuni to 776 BC (see, for example, Harutyunyan 1959, 78); and, in still another, more recent development, Fuchs (2012) has proposed that Erebuni was founded in 775 BC.

By (God) Haldi's order,
Argishti Minua's (son) say (this):
'(The city) Er(e)buni build I –
for the glory of Biainian (countries),
to the awe of enemies' (countries).
The land was barren:
nothing was built there;
powerful deeds (I) accomplished there:
6600 men of the battle I settled
there from (the country of) Khate, from (the country of) Tsupani.[3]

Four abbreviated and slightly different versions of this same text were also found at Erebuni itself. This metered, formulaic narrative makes a number of significant points. It relates that the fortress-city was built by Argishti son of Minua, the most powerful ruler in the history of Urartu; that this particular foundation was given the name of Erebuni, a toponym from which the name of Yerevan ultimately derives;[4] that it is possible to retrieve an exact date (within the regnal years of Argishti) for the establishment of the citadel; that this royal foundation was built – in line with well-attested Urartian practice – on previously unoccupied 'barren' ground rather than on the site of a previously existing settlement; and that this new stronghold was populated, in part, by 6600 warriors (and, we may assume, by their immediate dependents who were either transferred to or acquired at the new location), from the kingdom of Khate (to use the Neo-Hittite name) or Hatti (to use the Luwian name) and from Tsupani (Sophene of classical Greek and Roman sources and Ts'opk' of Armenian sources of late antiquity), i.e. from two areas that stood in the vicinity of the western bend of the Upper Euphrates.

From the contents of the text we can also infer that, from the beginning, the population of Erebuni must have exceeded 20,000 persons and that a major part of the inhabitants must have consisted of speakers of an Anatolian Luwian language, who probably still called themselves *Hittites*. Indeed, Erebuni appears to have been founded, in part at least, as a forward base for a series of campaigns that were designed to extend the northern bounds of Urartu from the plain of Ararat all the way to the Kura river; and, for the next six years, Erebuni probably controlled the greater part of this region (together with the

[3] *CTU* A 8-1 Vo_{13-22}.

[4] A detailed linguistic argument in favour of deriving the name of Yerevan from Erebuni was provided by F. König, I.M. Diakonoff, M.A. Israyelyan and N.V. Harutyunyan. Several hypotheses exist regarding the etymology of the name *Erebuni*, the most convincing of which considers it as a verbal noun derived from Urartian *erbitu* 'to conquer', 'to take over', 'to abduct', which would have given Erebuni a meaning such as 'The Conquered' or 'The Conquest'. *Cf.* Israyelyan 1971, 10–15.

slightly older Urartian city of Minuahinili) until Argishti decided to establish Argishtihinili, a new major city to which he gave his own name, and which eventually became known as Armavir, one of the principal administrative centres of the Orontid (Erwandean) satrapy of Armenia in Achaemenid times.

A Brief History of Excavations at Erebuni

Investigations at Erebuni have a long history. The initial, small-scale excavations were those directed in 1894 by A.A. Ivanovsky, under the auspices of the Archaeological Society of Moscow. At that time the site was known by the modern Armenian name of Arin-Berd (i.e. Fortress of Blood) or by the Turkic name of Ghanli-Tapa (i.e. Bloody Mound) – names which alluded, in part, to the reddish colour of the earthen surface of the citadel mound. Ivanovsky's pioneer researches were also part of a larger programme that was designed to examine all locations within Russian Armenia in which Urartian inscriptions had been found.[5]

The start of systematic excavations at Erebuni was triggered by the discovery of Urartian inscriptions that came to light during a survey in the autumn of 1950[6] that was carried out by K.L. Hovhannisyan (also spelled as Oganesyan, Hovhannissian, Hovhannisjan and Oganecian), the architectural historian of the Karmir-Blur Project, directed by B.B. Piotrovsky. Remarkably enough, one of the two inscriptions in question referred to the founding of the site – a circumstance that at once disclosed the original name of the citadel (Fig. 2).

For the next 17 seasons the excavations on the citadel mound were directed by Hovhannisyan, first as a subdivision of the Karmir-Blur Project, and then, from 1952 onwards, as a joint project of the Directorate for the Preservation of the Historical and Cultural Monuments of the Ministry of Urban Development of the Soviet Republic of Armenia, the Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts in Moscow and the Institute of History of the National Academy of Sciences of Armenia (the archaeological department of which was reorganised in 1961 into a separate Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography of the Armenian Academy). The associate directors of the project were, successively, the archaeologists I.M. Loseva and S.I. Khodzhash, complemented by the noted epigraphists, M.A. Israyelyan and N.V. Harutyunyan.

[5] Ivanovskii 1911, 55.
[6] Hovhannisyan 1951, 75–78.

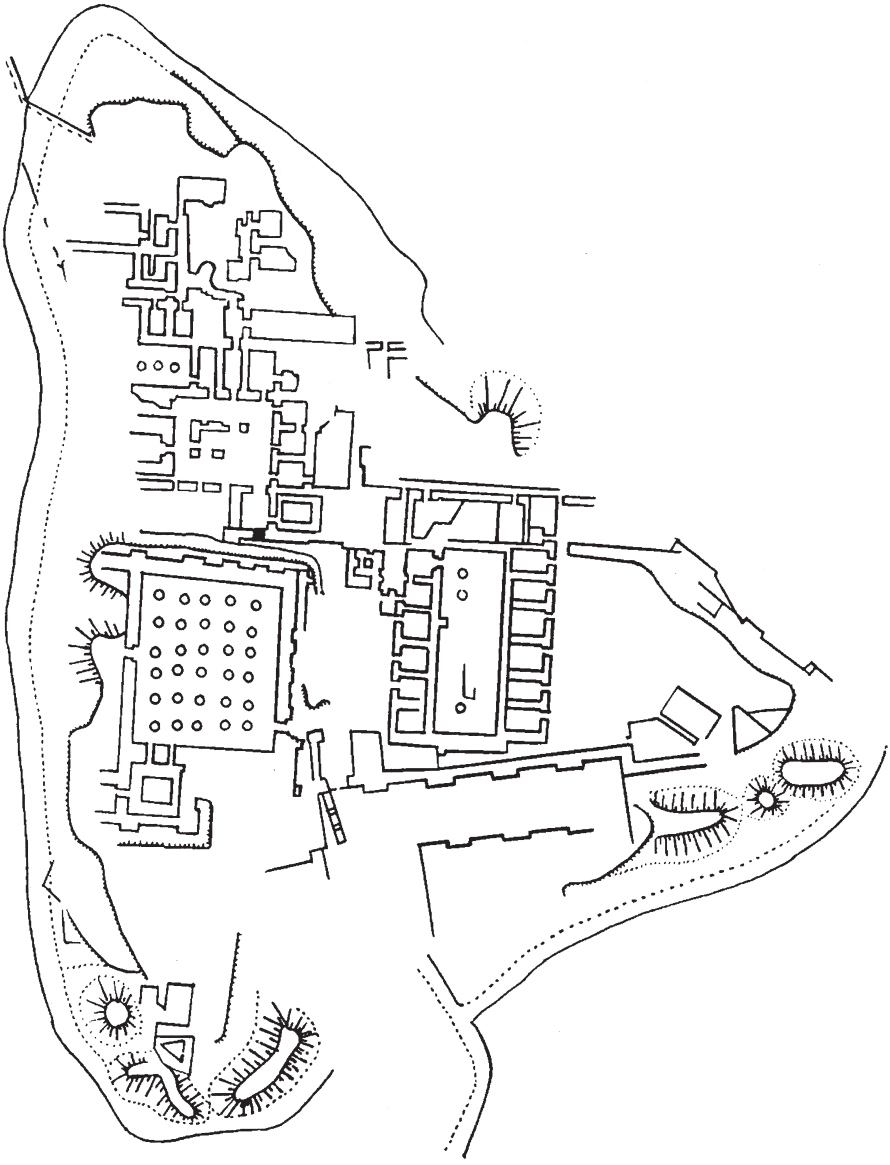

Fig. 2. Plan of the citadel at Erebuni. The plan shows the extent of Hovhannisyan's excavations towards the end of the 1950s. Note especially the eroded condition of the west flank of the site. The top of the plan is oriented towards conventional north (after Khodzhash *et al*. 1979, fig. 3).

Towards the end of the summer of 1967, the ongoing work at the site was brought to a halt in response to instructions issued by the office of the mayor of Yerevan. Following a high-level political decision to celebrate the 2750th anniversary of the founding of Yerevan in the year 1968 – a decision that was regarded as one of 'national importance' – the still only partly excavated site was selected as the core attraction in connection with the proposed festivities; and, in order to prepare the site for the arrival of tens of thousands of visitors, the 'cleaning of debris' by an unqualified workforce (equipped with heavy earth-moving machinery) at once took priority over all research-related activities. This last phase of the 1950–68 excavations at Erebuni was characterised, needless to say, by a lack of careful supervision and was followed, not least, by hurried 'reconstructions' in many parts of the site (Fig. 3). This has resulted in substantial and, in not a few places, irreparable damage to the monuments.

At the same time, however, the period from the late 1950s to the late 1960s was also marked by several separate archaeological discoveries that took place outside the walls of the citadel. In 1957 H.A. Martirosyan and H.H. Mnatsakanyan excavated at an Urartian cemetery that stood 2 km to the south-west of Erebuni. The excavators were able to record three burials in which the ashes of the dead had been placed in red burnished funerary urns. The deceased were also accompanied by exquisite funerary offerings. The latter consisted of bronze belts (embossed and engraved with hunting scenes, processions of warriors and sacred trees flanked by griffins) as well as by bronze horse-gear, weapons and ornaments (such as fibulae, bracelets, beads and a pectoral).[7] In 1965–66 S.A. Narimanyan was the first to detect a number of relatively modest houses of late Urartian date that stood on a sloping ridge situated some 150 m to the south-east of the citadel;[8] and, in 1968, a quite remarkable hoard consisting of five silver vessels of Achaemenid or near Achaemenid date chanced to be discovered – in a partly flattened condition, where they were presumably being stored as scrap metal – in a large ceramic jar that had been buried near the south-western limit of the citadel mound.[9]

A number of years later, a series of entirely new projects began to signal a significant revival of archaeological interest in Erebuni. A new, more exacting level of enquiry was introduced in 1998 when a team from Yerevan State University, under the direction of F.I. Ter-Martirosov, opened a number of soundings in different parts of the citadel. Ter-Martirosov's excavations on

[7] Martirosyan and Mnatsakanyan 1958.

[8] *Cf.* Khodzhash *et al.* 1979, 50 and figs. 37, 38; and Khodzhash 1982.

[9] *Cf.* Arakelian 1971 and Appendix 2 below. For the compressed condition of the objects when they were first discovered, see especially Hovhannisyan 1973, pls. 55–57.

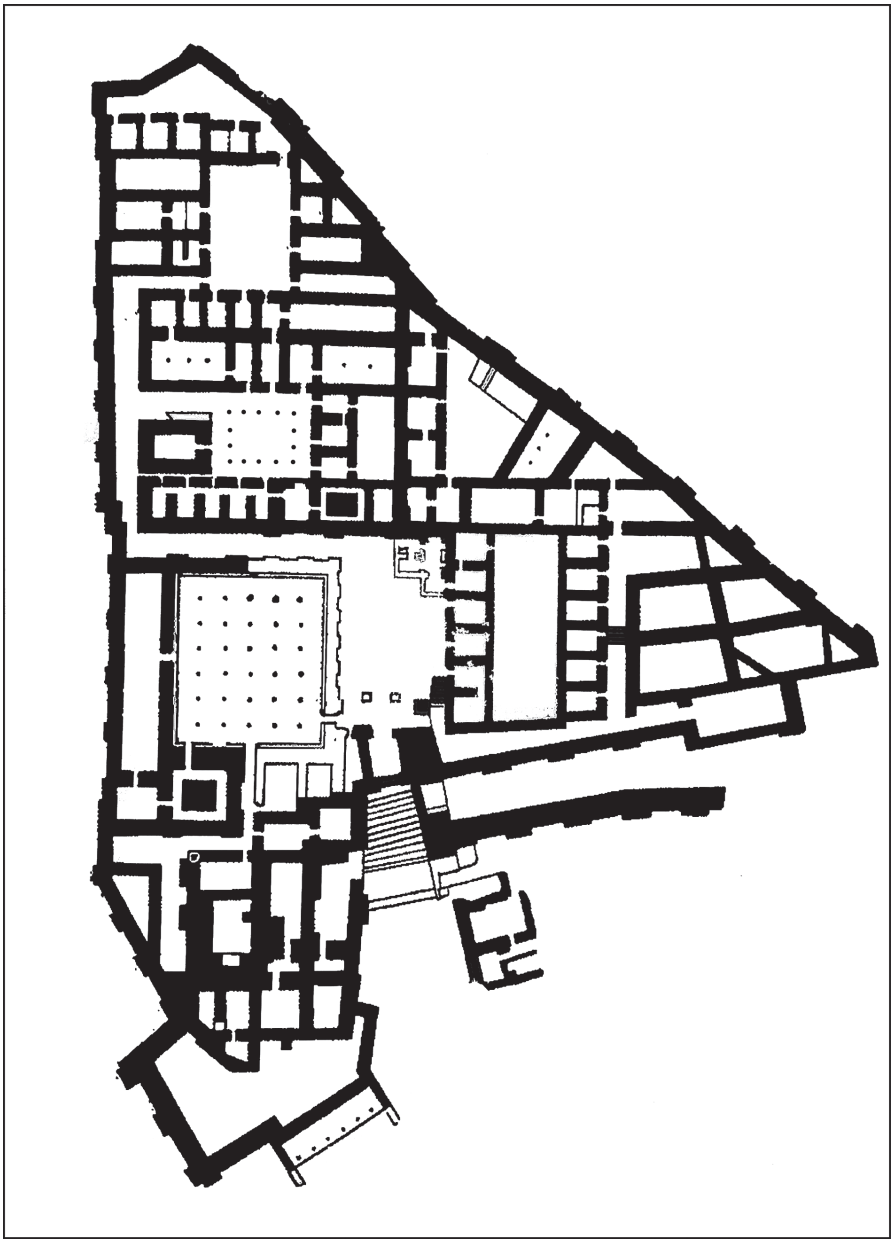

Fig. 3. Hovhannisyan's plan of the citadel at Erebuni (adapted from Hovhannisyan 1973, fig. 1). Note that excavated walls of Urartian date and modern 'restored' walls are both shown in black.

the steep slopes of the fortress were especially valuable in that they clearly demonstrated that the perimeter of the Urartian site was far from accurately represented by the course that Hovhannisyan chose for the present 'restored' perimeter wall. As a glance at Fig. 1 reveals, this modern wall does not even extend to the true limits of the citadel's more or less flat summit, let alone overlap with the top of the mound's steep contours. Indeed, Hovhannisyan's misrepresentation of the full size of the citadel was recently affirmed by soundings that were conducted on the upper slopes of the citadel by A.S. Piliposyan.[10]

Finally, beginning in 2008, two separate excavation teams – one from the University of California at Berkeley, led by D. Stronach, and one from CNRS and the University of Rennes, led by S. Deschamps – were invited by the Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography of the National Academy of Sciences of Armenia to join in separate but closely associated excavations in the vicinity of the temple of Haldi (Fig. 1). The work of the former team concluded in 2010 and the work of the latter team concluded in 2016.

Patterns of Construction at Erebuni

The main elements of the plan of the Urartian citadel were all effectively introduced during the reigns of Argishti I (786–764 BC) and his son, Sarduri II (764–730 BC).[11] With the exception of a single inscription of Rusa son of Erimena, all the remaining 23 monumental building inscriptions that have come to light at Erebuni have proved to belong to these two rulers – a situation that assuredly reflects a period of intense construction during, approximately, the first 50 years of the site's existence, an interval which is here designated as Period Ia.[12]

Beginning in Period Ia, the main open space within the walls of the citadel consisted of a prominent central court – a rectangular space that was flanked by the main entrance to the fortress; by appointments that are here assumed to include a temple of Haldi (see below); and by two of Argishti's main palatial units. The principal entrance to the citadel faced the least steep side of the mound (Fig. 1), where the relatively gentle contours presumably allowed for

[10] Personal information. It is still difficult, however, to calculate the exact length of each side of the roughly triangular space that was occupied by the citadel. At a rough guess, the walled citadel may have originally covered an area that was between 1.78 and 1.90 ha in size.

[11] The traditionally accepted date for the end of the reign of Sarduri II is 735 BC. Here we follow a slightly later date, recently proposed by Salvini (*CTU* I, 23).

[12] For chronological observations associated with the site as a whole, see pp. 628–35 below.

the construction of a roadway for chariots and other wheeled traffic to wind its way from the foot of the rock outcrop to the gates of the citadel.[13]

To the left – or to the west – of the main gate stood the building that is here identified as the core structure of the temple of Haldi, the supreme god of the Urartian imperial pantheon (Fig. 4.1). The structure in question is distinguished by an inscription of Argishti I situated on the east face of its north-east corner buttress.[14] On the north and east sides of the central court, further inscriptions signal the presence of two separately named parts of Argishti's extensive palatial quarters. From one inscription that was built into the west wall of a short hallway that led from the central court of the citadel to the outer courtyard of the main palatial quarter (Fig. 4.14), we learn that we have reached the precincts of 'the Great Palace'[15] and elsewhere – in several inscriptions carved on cylindrical basalt column bases located inside Argishti's large audience hall on the east side of the central court (Fig. 4.11) – we learn of a second palatial complex of Argishti.[16] Still other epigraphic evidence from this general area suggests that a number of granaries and a royal armoury may also have been located in the southern half of the citadel.

All the monumental features that stood inside the bounds of the citadel were protected by a strongly fortified perimeter wall, parts of which were uncovered during Hovhannisyan's excavations, parts of which were destroyed during the so-called 'conservation and restoration' programme of 1968 and parts of which still await discovery.

The Temple of Haldi

In keeping with one of the customary norms of Urartian planning, the temple of Haldi appears to have been founded on the highest point within Argishti's already elevated stronghold (Fig. 1). In this position it stood close to the prestigious western edge of the site, where the upper part of the structure was presumably visible from afar to all who approached the citadel from the direction of the Ararat plain.

[13] Note also that the corners of buildings within the citadel are more or less aligned with the cardinal points (Fig. 1). Accordingly, when describing the building remains associated with the citadel, the present authors have elected – in keeping with a convention that is to be found in a number of prior contributions – to use a north-west compass reading as a conventional north point.

[14] For further discussion, see below.

[15] *CTU* A 8-20.

[16] *Cf. CTU* A 8-23 A; A 8-23 B; A 8-23 C; A 8-24 D. The construction of the 'South Palace' is probably also commemorated by two other inscriptions (*CTU* A 8-18 and *CTU* A 8-19), each of which would appear to have once stood in the near vicinity of the city gate.

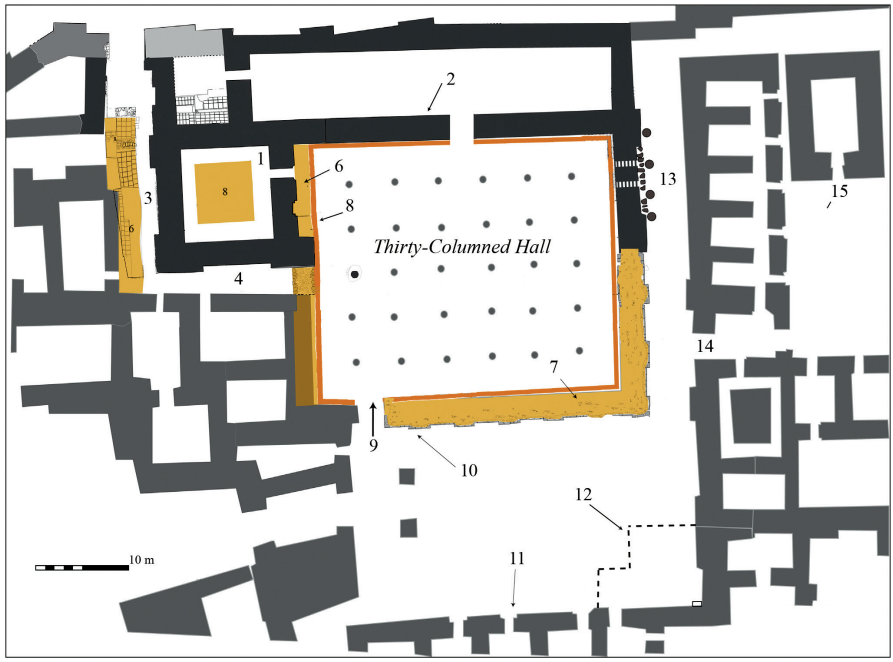

Fig. 4. Plan of the temple of Haldi and the Thirty-Columned Hall (adapted, in part, from Deschamps 2016, fig. 12).

1. The temple of Haldi. 2. The L-shaped M3 wall that flanked the west side and part of the north side of the north terrace of the temple of Haldi and, subsequently, the same sides of the Period II Thirty-Columned Hall. 3. The south passage. 4. The east passage. 5. The location of a secondary mud-brick pylon. 6. The south wall of the hall. 7. The north-east wall of the hall. 8. The white-plastered mud-brick bench of the Thirty-Columned Hall. 9. The main entrance to the hall. 10. A cobbled area within the central courtyard. 11. The arrow points towards the location of the South Palace of Argishti. 12. A Period II structure with mud-brick vaulting struts. 13. A possible, blocked 'north entrance' to the north terrace. 14. Entrance to the Great Palace. 15. Location of the long-lived *susi* temple and the Period II peristyle court.

During Hovhannisyan's long sojourn at Erebuni, it was generally believed that the plan of the temple included four main elements. These were defined by the excavator as (a) a deep 'entrance portico' with two rows of six columns; (b) a long adjacent room, *ca*. 37 m in length, that was entered at its mid-point from the 'portico' and was thought to have been the cella; (c) a small square room that had one doorway in its north wall and was believed to have another in its east wall; and (d) a substantial tower (frequently referred to as a ziggurat) with one doorway in its west wall and either one or two doorways in its north wall (*cf*. Figs. 2 and 3).

As for the respective sources of inspiration for these diverse elements, it was suggested that the 'entrance portico' with two rows of six columns (Fig. 5) was based on aspects of the plan of the North Syrian *bit hilani*;[17] that the long narrow room could be compared with the elongated proportions of sanctuaries in Assyria;[18] and that the 'tower' accorded with longstanding Mesopotamian traditions in which temples of note were frequently associated with a ziggurat.[19] But while Hovhannisyan never seems to have lost his belief in such far-flung parallels, and never seems to have had any reservations about the validity of his various claims,[20] one of the main challenges for current researchers includes the necessary correction of several assertions that pertain to this important area of Erebuni. In addition, it would now seem to be advisable to take note of the nature of other Urartian temples, where, over the past five decades, religious buildings of a very different nature have come to light.

In particular, it may be useful to recall that excavated evidence from within the bounds of Urartu had already begun to demonstrate, from the early 1960s onwards, that Urartian temples often had a distinctive, more or less uniform character. That is to say that they often consisted, at least in part, of a tall, freestanding square building that measured close to 13.50 m on each side. Such structures were characterised, furthermore, by a square cella, four prominent corner buttresses and a single doorway (Fig. 6).[21]

It is obvious from these observations that the somewhat tower-like building at Erebuni is frequently at odds with the 'characteristic features' that are found in other Urartian temples. The building is connected, not least, to the major M3 wall (Fig. 4.2), in much the same, unusual way that the rear wall of the temple of Haldi at Ayanis is built up against an adjacent, substantial wall.[22] It may also be noted that the four walls of the temple at Erebuni are not as wide as might be expected for a tall tower-like structure and that the building's corners are anything but consistent in size and shape. Also, while the proposed cella is square, the overall *external* plan of the building – with maximum dimensions of approximately 17 × 15 m – is clearly rectangular rather than square in shape.[23]

[17] Hovhannisyan 1961, 52, 54.

[18] *Cf.* Hovhannisyan 1961, 53.

[19] For example Hovhannisyan 1961, 54.

[20] *Cf.* Hovhannisyan 1996.

[21] See G. Tiratsyan 1964; Stronach 1967. Note, too, T. Özgüç's prescient comment that his excavation of a tower-like building at Altıntepe had probably allowed him to recover 'a complete record of a developed Urartian temple plan' (Özgüç 1966, 39). *Cf.* also Stronach 2012, 310–14.

[22] *Cf.* Çilingiroğlu 2012, fig. 20.07.

[23] One other anomaly within the important square room of the temple at Erebuni (Fig. 4.1) is the presence – according to Loseva (1958, 180) – of an internal 'niche'. She suggests that the statue of a deity could have stood within this same feature, but since the extant remains show no

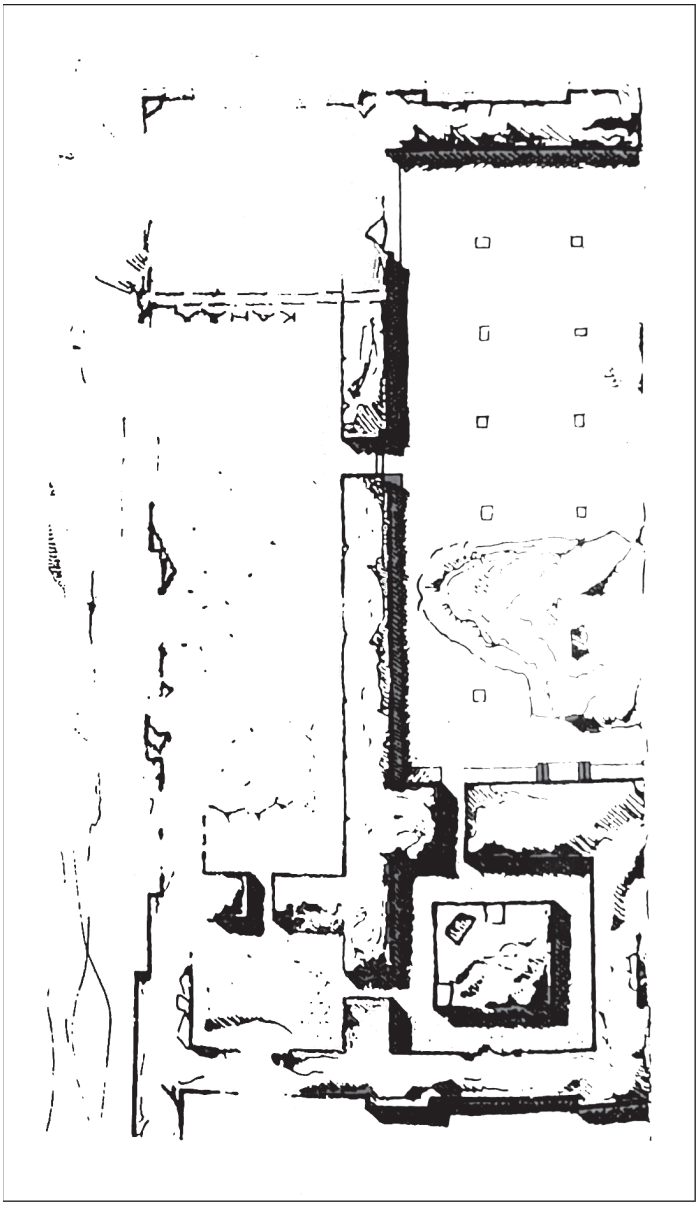

Fig. 5. Hovhannisyan's proposed plan of the temple of Haldi at Erebuni. Unfortunately, the plan includes certain architectural features that are imaginary (such as a non-existent doorway) and other elements that clearly post-date the active life of the temple (such as part of the bench of the Period II Thirty-Columned Hall) (after Hovhannisyan 1961, fig. 25a).

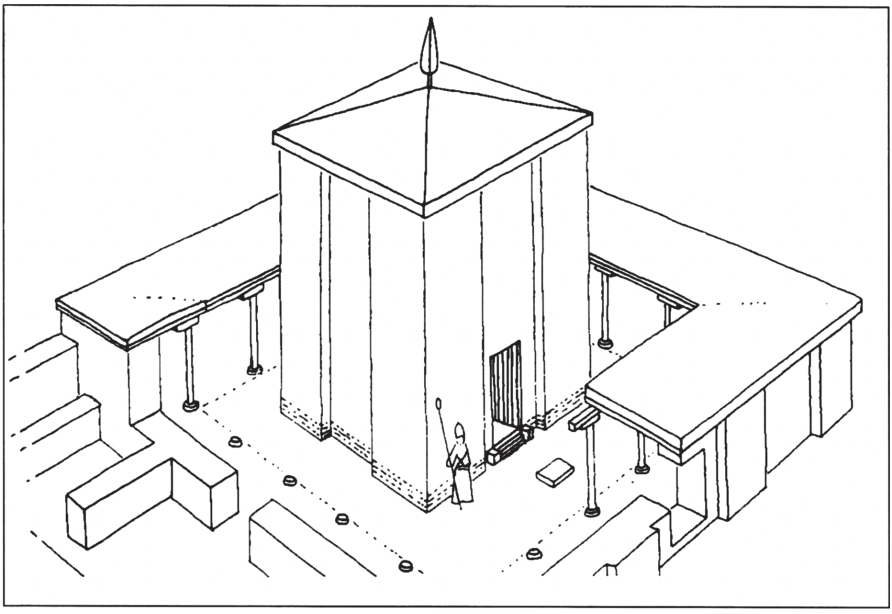

Fig. 6. Reconstruction of a 'standard' Urartian temple (after Kleiss 1976, fig. 27).

Argishti's inscription on the north-east buttress of the temple[24] can perhaps be understood to refer not just to the immediate structure to which it is attached (Fig. 7), but to a more extensive area that was presumably considered to be 'the house of Haldi', i.e. as the dwelling place of Haldi. Translated into English, the text reads:

> For Haldi, the lord,
> This house Argishti
> Son of Minua has built.
> Argishti says…

According to those scholars who have worked most closely on the inscription – including Harutyunyan, Melikishvili, Israelyan and Salvini – the last two lines consist of currently untranslatable religious formulas.[25] At the same time, if we take into account both the understandable portion of the inscription and the nature of other locally available archaeological evidence, there could

sign of any such niche, and since no other Urartian cella is known to have possessed an internal niche, this claim should be viewed with caution.

[24] *CTU* A 8-24

[25] *Cf. CTU* I, 359.

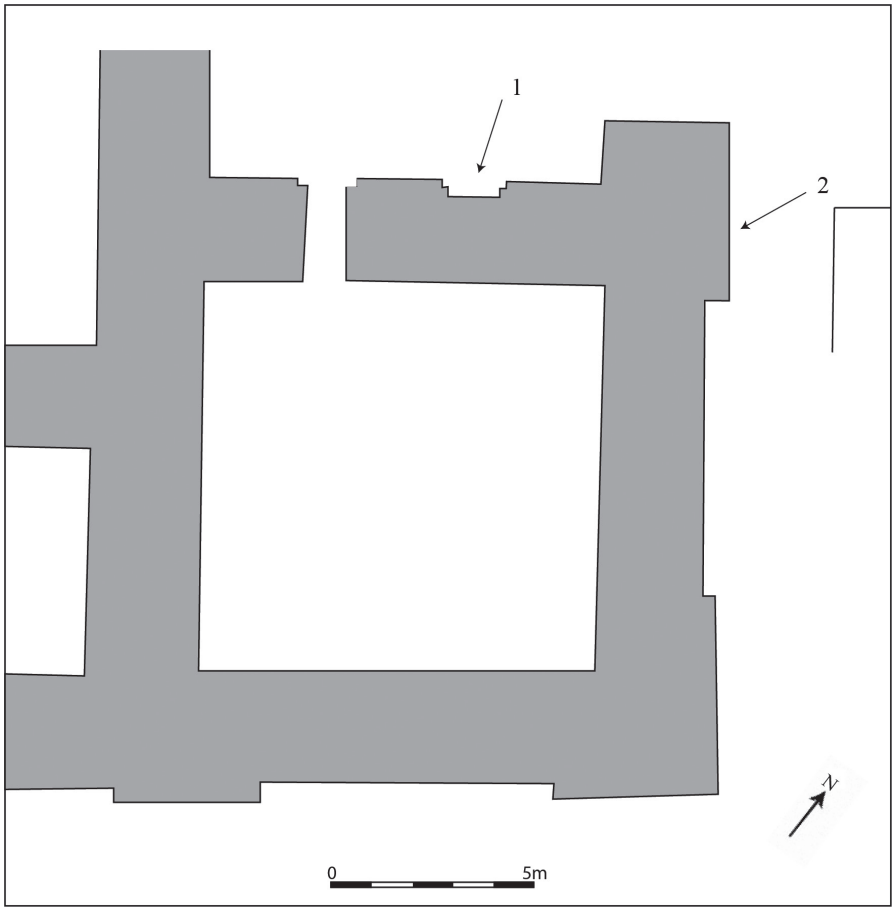

Fig. 7. Plan of the partly buttressed walls of the core structure of the temple of Haldi at Erebuni. Note the location of the red-painted recess (1) and that of the inscription of Argishti I on the east face of the north-eastern buttress (2). Note also that a single rabbet on the west side of the doorway was not certainly matched by a corresponding rabbet on the east side of the doorway (after Stronach *et al*. 2010, fig. 6).

be adequate grounds to suggest that the inscription was intended to mark the beginning of the extensive precincts of a rather exceptional, relatively early temple of Haldi.

In this context, it is worth recalling that the whole site of Erebuni is said to have been founded in accord with Haldi's command; that the highest extant point of the 60 m-high rock outcrop was conceivably displayed in the west jamb of the sole entrance to the 'tower' (Fig. 8); and that certain inscribed

Fig. 8. The partly rock-cut entrance passage of the temple of Haldi, viewed from the north. Also just visible (beyond the far end of the doorway) is part of the brickwork of the pylon that was constructed within the cella, presumably at the time that the temple was being prepared for permanent closure (after Stronach *et al.* 2010, pl. 31.1).

shields that were dedicated to Haldi during the regnal years of Argishti I and Sarduri II (and which came to light during the excavations at Karmir-Blur) are likely to have been transferred from Erebuni to a new temple at Karmir-Blur (Fig. 9). In addition, it emerges that a significant part of the long M3 wall was decorated by wall-paintings that date to Period Ia – and that such paintings included at least one representation of the god Haldi (Fig. 10).[26]

There is also further evidence that came to light during the excavations of the Berkeley team that calls for consideration. When it was discovered, in 2009, that Hovhannisyan had failed to locate a major part of the external, north face of the temple, a concerted effort to trace the missing portion of the plan promptly revealed a centrally placed, hitherto undetected red-painted niche located at the mid-point of the entrance façade (Figs. 7, 11–12).[27]

[26] *Cf.* Hovhannisyan 1973, 76, and especially Appendix 1 below.
[27] *Cf.* especially Stronach *et al.* 2010, 110–12.

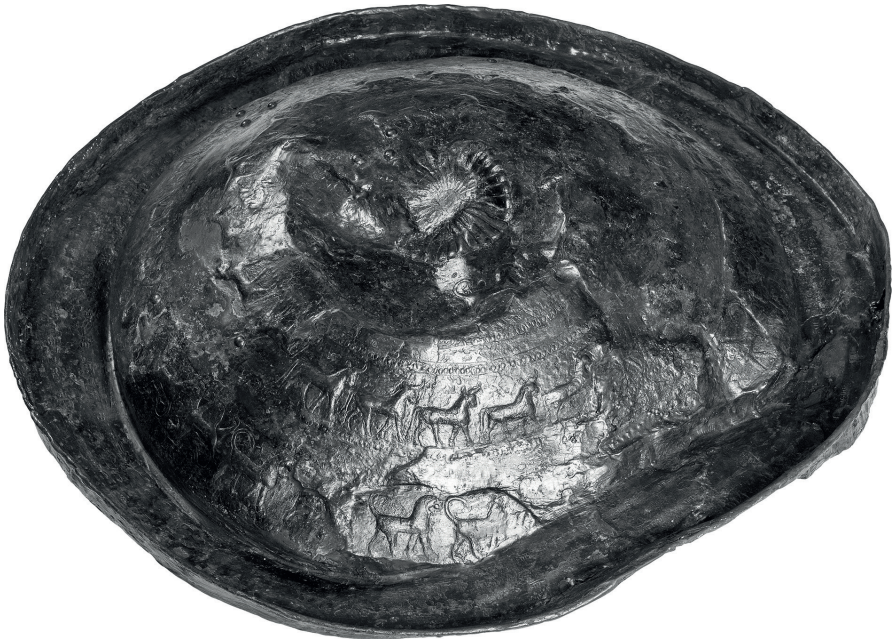

Fig. 9. An inscribed bronze shield (decorated with concentric rows of embossed and engraved lions and bulls) that was dedicated to Haldi by Argishti I. Following the shield's transfer from Erebuni to Karmir-Blur, it was recovered during Piotrovsky's excavations at the latter site (photograph courtesy of the Museum of History of Armenia, Yerevan).

At a point located a little over 2.40 m to the east of the doorway of the temple the plastered face of the north wall of the temple suddenly turned southwards. This change of direction proved to be the first indication that a painted niche (or recess) with double rabbets stood approximately halfway between the sole doorway to the cella and the protruding west face of the temple's large north-eastern buttress. The door-like qualities of this feature are of special interest. Apart from the fact that the niche measures over 2 m in height (and could very well have risen to a still greater height), its double rabbets may be compared with the double external rabbets that are found, for example, on the doorway of the temple of Haldi at Ayanis.

The most relevant analogy, however, could be said to come from the double rabbets of the inscribed Urartian rock-cut niche that is located near Tushpa and which is popularly known today as Meher Kapısı.[28] The parallel is underscored by the Meher Kapısı inscription, which reads 'To Haldi, the Lord, did

[28] Salvini 1995, fig. 9.

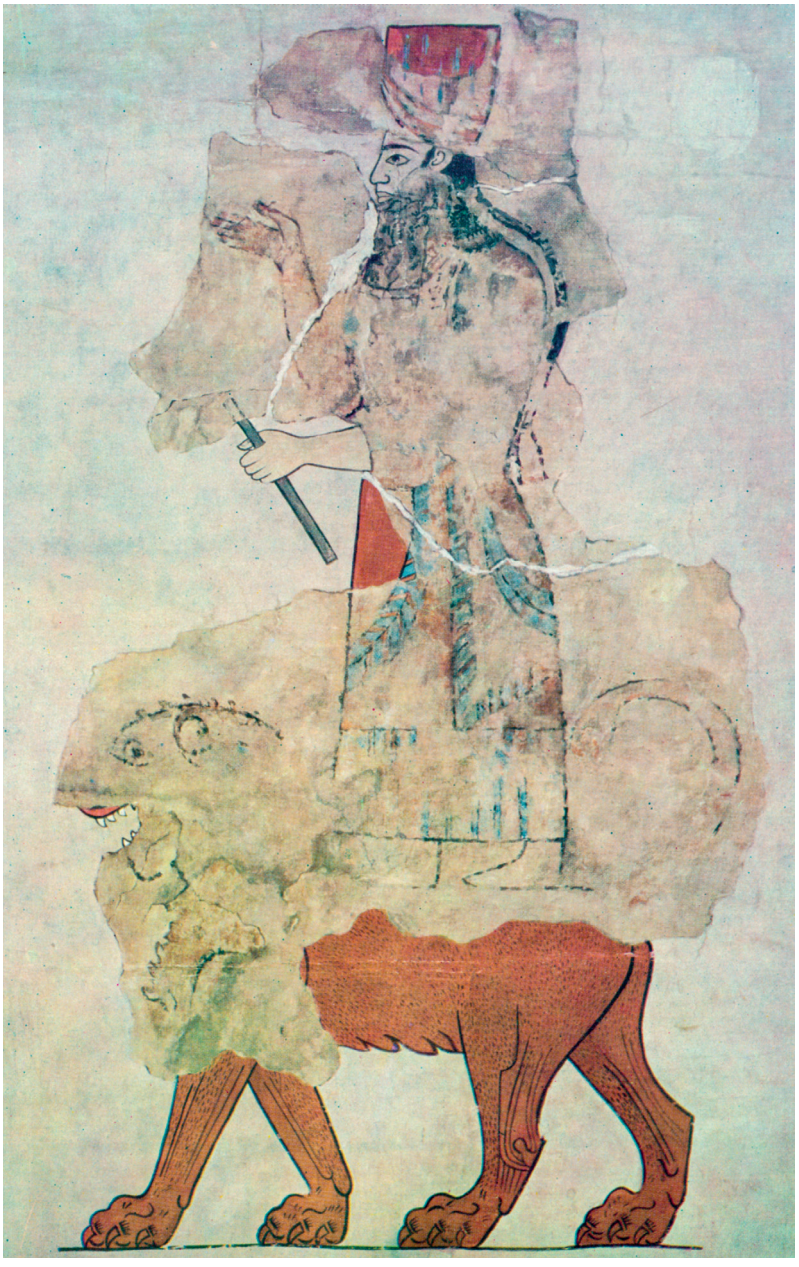

Fig. 10. A restored painting of Haldi, shown standing on the figure of a striding lion. The painting originally stood on the eastern face of the M3 wall (after Hovhannisyan 1973, pl. 46).

Fig. 11. The upper part of the red-painted recess on the entrance façade of the temple of Haldi as it appeared at the end of the 2009 season of excavations (after Stronach *et al*. 2010, pl. 32.2).

Fig. 12. Vivid red paint recorded in the lower part of the painted recess soon after it was exposed in 2010 (after Stronach *et al*. 2010, pl. 33.2).

Ishpuini, son of Sarduri, and Minua, son of Ishpuini, erect these doors'.[29] Accordingly, it seems likely that Argishti I, the founder of Erebuni, not only sought to emulate the achievement of his father and grandfather in creating similarly designed doors of Haldi, but that he sought to establish his own doors (or gates) of Haldi within the limits of the new northern territories that he was in the process of adding to his dominions.

With reference to various not-yet-mentioned features of the square cella, it is of interest that part of the floor includes a levelled rock-cut surface that extends northwards from the north part of the cella into the building's single entrance passage near its north-west corner (Fig. 8) and that the top of the stone socle of the east wall is capped by unusually flat, very carefully dressed stones (Fig. 13) that must have created a markedly level foundation for the mud-brick superstructure. In addition, with reference to the religious identity of the tower alone, certain hitherto unmentioned counter-arguments should probably find some place in this account. In this context a non-axial doorway

Fig. 13. The north-east corner of the cella of the temple of Haldi. Note that the stone socle of the north wall of the cella (seen on the left) rises to a greater height than the socle of the adjoining east wall (after Stronach *et al*. 2010, pl. 30.1).

[29] *CTU* A3-1_{1-2}.

could be construed as a logical correlate to the presence of a staircase that depended on the existence of a large central newel (Fig. 5). It is also quite striking that, whenever the central newel (or pylon) was introduced (either when the tower was first built or when the tower was about to be permanently closed), a notable effort seems to have been made to found the brickwork of this central feature directly on the native bedrock.[30]

A Southern Approach to the Temple of Haldi

Even if the greater part of the overall plan at Erebuni came to be exposed – in broad brush terms – during the course of Hovhannisyan's long-lasting excavations, little is known about the character of many of the individual rooms and the shape of not a few of the rooms can be seen to have been improbably restored as neither square nor completely rectangular in shape (Fig. 3). For the moment, moreover, it remains difficult to say anything definitive about the precise shape and details of the main gateway that led into the fortress in Urartian times. The contours of the rock outcrop and the approximate original location of two inscriptions of Argishti I that once stood on opposite sides of the entryway suggest that the main entrance must always have been located on the south side of the citadel, but important evidence as to exactly how this exposed approach was originally protected was apparently removed in the 1950s and 1960s without the retention of adequate records.[31] All that can be vouchsafed at the moment is that the flanks of the main approach would seem to have been overlooked by a prominent, projecting portion of the citadel to the south-west of the main gate[32] and by the remains of two or more parallel lines of regularly buttressed walling to the east of the gate (Fig. 3).

The recent excavations of the French-Armenian expedition have succeeded in the meantime in revealing – probably well within the original line of the still far from reliably documented western limits of the citadel – the details of a hitherto incompletely examined 'southern approach' to the precincts of the temple of Haldi. This approach – strictly designed for foot-traffic – seems to

[30] Note also that the plan of the Great Palace of Argishti includes a further possible stairwell in the immediate vicinity of the entrance (Fig. 3).

[31] To the best of G. Areshian's present recollection.

[32] Exactly how an isolated, improbably designed 'portico' near the southernmost limit of the site (Fig. 3) would have fitted into Erebuni's once heavily fortified perimeter defenses remains a mystery. At the very least it would seem advisable to presume that this structure was originally a rectangular hall with a central row of column bases (*cf.* Fig. 1) rather than an open-sided columned portico – and that, just conceivably, this oddly positioned 'southern hall' played a role in the initial reception of visitors of rank.

have extended, in part, from the west end of the south passage to the north end of the east passage, i.e. it skirted the walls of the temple of Haldi on two sides (Fig. 4.3 and 4). In following this circuitous route, visitors to the temple would also have been able to take note of the inscription on the north-eastern buttress of the temple at a convenient eye-level height before they began to climb the stone steps of a no longer extant staircase that would have brought them close to the level of the north terrace and the north-facing entrance of the temple.

This winding, somewhat indirect approach to the temple of Haldi was presumably kept free of any obstacles for a not inconsiderable period of time before a variety of secondary constructions first narrowed (and, in the end, completely blocked) this once significant artery. The long-ignored successive levels of occupation within these two passages have also yielded a sequence of stratified pottery that promises to provide an important basis for the study of the most recently excavated pottery from Erebuni.[33]

The North Terrace of the Temple of Haldi

The excavations of the past few years have also revealed something of the history of a significant 'north terrace' that lay to the north of the temple of Haldi and its red-painted recess. There are many indications that Argishti's builders used large quantities of stone to make up the level of the north terrace, especially on the west side of this particular feature where the native rock begins to fall away from the known height of the rock floor outside the doorway of the temple. In this context, the north-south part of the M3 wall (Fig. 4.2) served as a vital anchor for this stone fill. This same L-shaped wall, which displayed wall-paintings that included a depiction of Haldi (Fig. 10), would also appear to have defined the west and north limits of the long, rectangular north terrace as well as the west and north limits of any rectangular room that may once have offered shelter to worshippers in this same area. Each of the original – now missing – 12 column bases in this presumably roofed space almost certainly belonged to the type of cylindrical basalt column base that Argishti especially favoured: a type of exceptionally hard stone column base that was frequently 'salvaged' for re-use in later times. But instead of simply reporting that the column bases in this area were missing, Hovhannisyan seems to have chosen to replace the missing bases with modern square-shaped stone

[33] For further commentary on the important excavations that were carried out in the south and east passages, see especially Deschamps *et al.* 2011, 124–29; Deschamps and Fichet de Clairfontaine 2013, 1662–66; and Deschamps 2016, 211–15.

bases (that were supported at least in part, by modern sub-floor concrete foundations).[34] Furthermore, Hovhannisyan appears to 'record' these square stone bases as emerging *in situ* during the course of his excavations (Fig. 5).[35]

The Thirty-Columned Hall

Without exploring the way in which important changes in plan in the vicinity of the tower-like temple of Haldi may have been related to specific historical events, we may take brief note at this moment of certain of the successive building operations that accompanied the closure of the 'tower' (i.e. the closure of the core structure of the temple of Haldi) and the introduction, not too long afterwards, of a new type of columned hall with five rows of six columns (Fig. 4). In the case of the doorway to the cella and the red-painted niche at the mid-point of the north wall of the temple, both of these features were sealed by carefully laid mud bricks that then came to form part of the south wall of the new Thirty-Columned Hall (Fig. 14). In addition, the stone steps that had long stood at the north end of the east passage came to be replaced by a substantial stone socle that then also became part of the south wall of the new hall.

With reference to the other walls of the Thirty-Columned Hall, the L-shaped M3 wall not only served as the west wall of the hall, but it also served as the western half of the north wall of the hall. As a necessary complement to these arrangements, an entirely new 'north-eastern wall' (Fig. 4.7) subsequently completed the rather patchwork character of the four walls of the Thirty-Columned Hall. In particular, the way in which the socle of the north-eastern wall was constructed provides a number of contrasts with the building methods that were employed in Period Ia. Thus each side of the stone socle of the north-eastern wall (which only rises to a modest height of *ca.* 0.4–0.5 m) exhibits a single row of neatly dressed greyish-green andesite blocks (Fig. 15) that would appear to represent spolia. M. Roaf has suggested, in fact, that these elegantly dressed stones may have been spoila brought to Erebuni from Karmir-Blur following the destruction of this adjoining site.[36]

[34] *Cf.* Stronach *et al*. 2010, pl. 41a.

[35] At the same time it should be emphasised that the long, narrow proportions of the north terrace could never have accommodated the type of broad, three-sided arcade that Stronach at one time thought might have stood to the north of the temple of Haldi for at least a short period of time. A possible plan of this strictly hypothetical arcade appears in Stronach *et al*. 2010, fig. 9, but the same plan was almost at once repudiated (in a paper co-authored by Stronach) in the following year. See Deschamps *et al*. 2011, 126, n. 3.

[36] *Cf.* Stronach *et al*. 2010, 120, n. 2.

Fig. 14. A section cut through the south mud-brick wall of the Thirty-Columned Hall, where it abuts against the north wall of the temple of Haldi. From left to right one can observe the mud bricks of the south wall of the columned hall; the vertical line of clay plaster that still adheres to the north side of the north wall of the temple; and the rabbets on the east side of the painted recess following the removal of the recess's painted, plastered surface by members of the technical staff of the Erebuni Museum (after Deschamps *et al*. 2011, pl. 19.1).

The internal dimensions of the new hall measured 33 m from north to south and 29 m from east to west (Fig. 4) and its ceiling appears to have been supported – in a dramatic departure from prior Urartian building practices, but in keeping with notable Median innovations at Godin Tepe near Hamadan – by five rows of six wooden columns.[37] With reference to the 'column foundations' within the Thirty-Columned Hall that were first encountered during the excavations of the 1950s (Fig. 16), Loseva found that each Period II column foundation consisted, in its original condition (before its height was raised by a modern concrete insert), of a sub-floor slab of tuff (Fig. 17) on which the lower end of each wooden column rested. To make sure, moreover, that each column remained in its intended position, a ring of small stones and

[37] *Cf*. Gopnik 2010, fig. 17.3.

Fig. 15. Note the cobbled surface of the central court (in the foreground) and the low bosses on the finely dressed andesite blocks that line the exterior of the low socle of the wall near the south-east corner of the Thirty-Columned Hall (after Stronach *et al*. 2010, pl. 39.2).

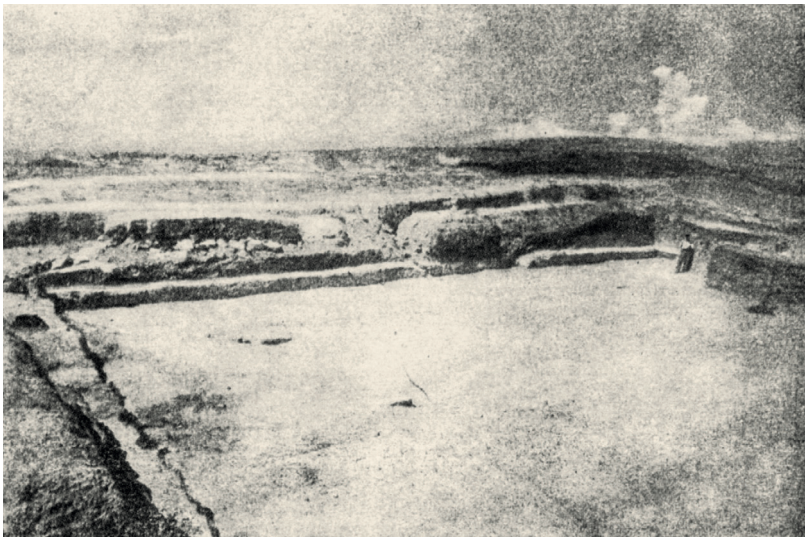

Fig. 16. A general view of the Thirty-Columned Hall, facing south, soon after it was discovered (after Hovhannisyan 1961, fig. 39). Note especially the mainly smooth, level condition of the floor (apart from two places where slightly displaced sub-floor column supports appear to have been slightly disturbed) and the intact condition of much of the bench near the south west corner of the hall, to the left of the standing figure.

Fig. 17. A roughly shaped 'column support', cut from locally available tuff, that originally stood below floor level in the Period II Thirty-Columned Hall. The stone in question owes its present above-floor-level-elevation to the presence of a modern concrete insert that was introduced in 1968 (after Stronach *et al*. 2010, pl. 41.2).

clay mortar was originally placed around the base of each column at floor level.[38] Indeed, this latter arrangement allows us to state with some certainty that the approximate diameter of each column in the hall was close to 0.43 m and that the standard distance between columns was *ca*. 4.10–4.20 m.[39] In addition, the original nature of this type of 'column foundation' (*sans* any concrete insert!) very much recalls the nature of the column bases at the Median site of Tepe Nush-i Jan (Fig. 18), located 60 km to the south of Hamadan.

All four sides of the interior of the hall were also distinguished by a continuous, plastered mud-brick bench (Fig. 19) that was only interrupted by the presence of the hall's two doorways: a single external doorway near the south-east corner of the hall and an internal doorway that appears to have stood near the mid-point of the west wall. The latest plastered floor of the hall also proved to have been covered with woven reed mats, on which Loseva reports finding 'red-polished potsherds' as well as other potsherds and a scatter of

[38] Loseva 1958, 181–84.
[39] *Cf*. also Hovhannisyan 1980, 95–98.

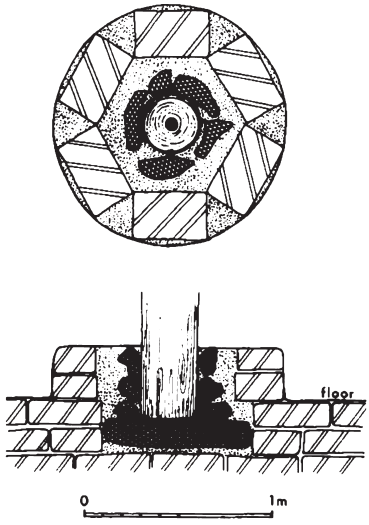

Fig. 18. A schematic reconstruction of a column base from the columned hall of Median date at Tepe Nush-i Jan (after Stronach and Roaf 2007, fig. 7.4).

Fig. 19. The north end of the interior face of the east wall of the columned hall, viewed from the west. Here a quantity of small reddish-buff stones can be seen to rest against the internal face of the wall. Also, although the excavations in the 1950s more or less completely removed the mud-brick bench in this vicinity, a strong white plaster line in the floor still documents the position of the former front edge of the bench (after Stronach *et al*. 2010, pl. 40.2).

bronze trilobate arrowheads.[40] In addition, a flat-topped, three-stepped 'altar' originally formed an integral part of the upper surface of the south bench at a distance of *ca.* 7 m from the south-west corner of the hall (Fig. 5). Traces of burning were originally visible on the flat top of this stepped feature as well as on the nearest wall-face. All in all, therefore, the Thirty-Columned Hall of Period II would seem to have preserved a certain degree of sanctity (especially in the area of the south wall, adjacent to the location of the former temple of Haldi) apart from offering a clearly spacious location for audiences and receptions. The presence of arrowheads on the latest floor of the hall may also suggest (together with signs of burning that were discovered at several separate locations on the surface of the site from 1950 onwards)[41] that the Period II fortress at Erebuni eventually fell to an attack by a powerful external force.

The Great Palace of Argishti I

A second monumental architectural complex – named 'the Great Palace' (literally É.GAL, or 'the big house') in an inscription of Argishti[42] – stood on the north side of the central court (Fig. 4.14). Separated from the precincts of the temple of Haldi by a walkway of variable width (Fig. 4.13), this extensive construction boasts a length of 83 m from north to south and it would appear to have occupied virtually the whole northern half of the citadel. The core plan of the palace visibly centres on two inner courtyards that were connected to each other (Fig. 3). The more southerly part of the palace, organised around the outer (or southern) courtyard, appears to have served the needs of the administrative-ceremonial and religious life of the occupants. It also contained living quarters that could have served to house the governor of Erebuni, not to mention Argishti himself whenever this formidable ruler had occasion to visit his northern territories. Elsewhere, the part of the palace constructed around the inner (or northern) courtyard was still not fully excavated when the 'restoration works' of 1968 intervened. At that time it was presumed to represent a service wing, even if the presence of certain elegant architectural details (such as doorways with rabbets) could point to a rather different function (i.e. to the presence of the most securely guarded, most private quarters of the palace).

[40] Loseva 1958, 183.
[41] *Cf.* Hovhannisyan 1951, 80.
[42] See n. 15 above.

Visitors entering the palace from the central courtyard of the citadel were obliged to pass through a double-leafed door, the paired door-sockets of which were still found *in situ*. Then, after passing close to the elevated building inscription of Argishti, they would have found themselves in the south-eastern corner of an outer courtyard, which was 17 × 19 m in size. During Period Ia the surface of this court was cobbled: a familiar form of flooring that was also employed in a number of other outdoor locations within the citadel.

The eastern, southern and northern sides of the outer court were formed by rows of contiguous rooms with doorways that opened onto the courtyard. The western side of the court was occupied, on the other hand, by a single free-standing building: Erebuni's much-discussed *susi* temple. This monumental structure, which can be seen to have lost its westernmost limits to the effects of severe erosion (Fig. 2), was restored in 1968 when it was given rather arbitrary external and internal dimensions of 10.00 × 13.45 m and 5.05 × 8.08 m respectively (Fig. 4.15). Very fortunately, however, the eastern façade of the building – where the only doorway opened onto the cobbled courtyard – proved to be well preserved. Here it is apparent that the walls of the temple were *ca*. 2.80 m thick and that the socle was constructed from two courses of large, cubic blocks of andesite. The latter blocks were carefully dressed, particularly in the immediate vicinity of the rabbeted doorway. The lower part of the doorway also stands between two nearly identical cuneiform inscriptions that begin as follows:

> For (God) Iwarsha this (house) susi
> Argishti Minua's (son)
> Has built…[43]

Iwarsha (also read as Iubsha by Diakonoff and Salvini) was, in all probability, the supreme deity of the country called Waza that occupied the Ararat plain on the left bank of the Araxes river – a territory that was presumably conquered by Argishti immediately before he founded Erebuni. The twin inscriptions on the entrance façade of the temple also underscore two important facts. First, that this building, which represented the focal point of the outer courtyard of the palace, was a *susi* temple; and, secondly, that the god Iwarsha (Iubsha) was neither 'lord', nor 'mighty', nor 'powerful' as was Haldi in the eyes of Argishti, but that he was important enough – at least at Erebuni – to occupy a divine rank that was second only to Haldi himself.

[43] *CTU* A 8-21A$_{1-3}$ and *CTU* B$_{1-3}$.

With the exception of certain parts of the external wall that stood directly beside the lower part of the doorway of the *susi* temple, the walls of the temple were given a thick coat of plaster before a final coat of plaster was painted an attractive shade of blue.[44] Furthermore, one of the more salient features of the *susi* is the monumentality of its walls. This circumstance allows us to infer that the *susi* of Iwarsha was a tall, tower-like structure that very possibly dominated a good part of the northern skyline of the citadel.

The northern and eastern rows of rooms that border the outer courtyard of the Great Palace include a number of distinctive features. Thus, while one of the rooms on the north side of the court served as a passageway to a room that opened into the inner (or northern) courtyard; another served as an antechamber that led to an elongated rectangular room that had a row of three cylindrical column bases. A row of three rooms, almost identical in size, also flanked the eastern side of the court. The northernmost and the southernmost of these rooms served as antechambers to a 17 m-long audience hall (the full length of which equalled the width of the adjacent courtyard). This important hall also proved to contain the best preserved wall-paintings to have come to light so far at Erebuni (see Appendix I below), together with traces of bronze nails (Assyrian *zigatti*) from which wall-coverings could have been hung.

Subsequent Changes to the Plan of the Great Palace

At some point in Period Ic (*ca*. 680/670–*ca*. 610 BC) at least one of the doorways that led from the antechambers to the ceremonial hall of the Great Palace was blocked with stones. The introduction of this barrier may have coincided with the sealing of the temple of Haldi and the near-abandonment of Erebuni as a major administrative and religious centre. In any event a considerable period of neglect must have elapsed in this specific area in order to account for the thick accumulation of clay (from adjacent, eroding mud-brick walls) that came to cover the original cobbled pavement of the outer court.

When Erebuni's political, administrative and military significance later revived, most probably after the destruction of Teishebaini (Karmir-Blur) at some date in the second half of the 7th century BC, the outer court of the Great Palace was remodeled as a peristyle courtyard in the immediate vicinity of the temple of Iwarsha. Eight stone column bases from the peristyle court were recovered (out of a probable original total of fourteen) during the course of Hovhannisyan's excavations. Such flat, slab-like stone bases were not at

[44] *Cf*. Hovhannisyan 1973, pl. 3.

all similar, however, to the Urartian cylindrical bases of Period Ia – and it would seem very likely that the peristyle court was built at much the same time as the Thirty-Columned hall, i.e. during Period II. Also, even if the connection may not be too close, the design of the peristyle court could be thought to owe at least something to the somewhat earlier type of four-sided arcade that surrounded the tower-temple at Altıntepe.[45]

At the end of Period II the Great Palace of Argishti appears to have been critically damaged by a number of destructive fires. In particular, Hovhannisyan noted the effects of such fires in the interior of the *susi* of Iwarsha, which was filled with pieces of charred beams and other burnt materials from the fallen roof; in a thick layer of burnt materials that filled the lower part of one of the antechambers of the 17 m-long audience hall; and in a layer of ash and charcoal that ran across a major part of the peristyle court.

The only two signs of building activity in the former Great Palace of Argishti in Period III (which equates with the duration of the greater part of the Achaemenid era) were encountered near the entrance to this palatial complex and in the immediate vicinity of the *susi* temple. In the first instance, a staircase of seven rather rough stone steps was introduced in order to connect a new floor level in the central court to the latest floor level in the outer court of the ruined palace. And in the second instance the columns of the peristyle court were largely removed and all the doorways of the semi-collapsed ceremonial rooms in this focal area were blocked. These actions isolated the former area of the peristyle court from other parts of the now dilapidated Great Palace and may have been intended to prepare the way for a new programme of construction.

Unfortunately, the mud-brick structures of Period III that were encountered in the former peristyle court were poorly preserved – and no intelligible plan was ever recovered. Nevertheless, Hovhannisyan was able to make a number of useful observations. He notes that certain of the latest structures in this area were founded at 0.4 m above the level of the lowest Urartian floor; and, from the debris-blocked condition of the *susi* temple, he is surely correct to presume that the temple was never restored to full use following the fires that marked the end of Period II. Indeed, he is probably correct to think that only a limited open space (situated in front of the still partly visible entrance façade of the venerable *susi* temple) continued to be reserved for the purpose of making offerings.

[45] *Cf.* n. 21 above.

All in all, however, Hovhannisyan was probably in error to suggest, on the basis of certain poorly preserved mud-brick remains, that an Achaemenid fire temple[46] eventually stood in the space that was formerly occupied by the peristyle courtyard. It is more likely, in fact, that the cult of Iwarsha – the local deity of the Ararat plain (acknowledged by now under this or another name) – continued to flourish, especially in this long-hallowed location, throughout the remaining years of Achaemenid rule. In this context the vicinity of the *susi* temple very possibly bears witness to a remarkable degree of continuity in local religious beliefs through the greater part of five centuries.[47]

The South (or Second) Palace of Argishti I in Period Ia

The scale of the court ceremonies that could be hosted at Erebuni would not seem to have taken too long to outgrow the more or less modest dimensions of the audience hall of the Great Palace, which measured no more than 126 m^2 in area – and there can be little doubt that this was one of the main reasons why Argishti chose to erect a second, much larger audience hall that was approximately four times the size of the first hall. But in cuneiform inscriptions that were cut into the surface of this latter structure's cylindrical basalt column bases – bases that would originally appear to have been arranged in two rows of five bases – this redoubtable monarch does no more than refer to his 'house' without further elaboration.[48]

This South (or Second) Palace was never completely excavated on its north and east sides, and it also appears to have been damaged by erosion on its south side before it suffered still further depredations at the time of the 'restorations' that took place in 1968. Thanks, however, to limited notes provided by Hovhannisyan,[49] and to additional details supplied by the principal excavator of the South Palace, A.A. Demskaya,[50] it is possible to describe the main characteristics of this impressive structure in its initial condition as well as to sketch something of its later history.

[46] See, for example, Hovhannisyan 1973, 59.

[47] The foregoing description and analysis of successive building events in and near the Great Palace of Argishti I is largely based on Hovhannisyan (1961; 1980; 1996) as well as on personal observations made by Areshian during his participation in the 1965–66 season of excavations at Erebuni.

[48] See n. 16 above.

[49] *Cf.* especially Hovhannisyan 1980.

[50] Demskaya 1968.

The South Palace can be seen to have had a rectangular plan, with a long axis that stretched from north to south, and with an overall plan in which its north-western corner was built up against part of the buttressed south wall of the Great Palace. Accordingly, the South Palace also served to frame the east side of the central courtyard as well as to face the north terrace of the temple of Haldi on the opposite, west side of the central courtyard. The plan of the palace (Fig. 3) also indicates, as has already been suggested, that the main function of the monument was to provide the largest, tallest and most impressive audience hall at Erebuni: a hall which was nearly 40 m in length and just over 13 m in width and which could easily have held several hundred people at one time.

In an arrangement that would seem to have had certain precedents in the plan of the Great Palace, the long walls of the large audience hall of the South Palace were each flanked by a row of square rooms (Fig. 3); and, in the case of those on the west side of the hall, the rabbeted outer doorjambs of the rooms in question all faced onto the central court. In one further analogy, three of the rooms in the western row of rooms would also appear to have served, at one time or another, as antechambers connected to the main hall.

While the originally plastered walls of the audience hall rested on a substantial stone socle that rose to a height of *ca*. 3 m, one of the more striking features of the whole construction is the substantial diameter of the cylindrical column bases, a number of which were still discovered *in situ*. Since the diameter of these bases is notably larger than the diameters of all other cylindrical column bases that are known from Erebuni, it is clear that the roof of the hall rose to an unusual height. Finally, it has to be stressed that the interior wall surfaces of the hall were originally decorated with panoramic wall-paintings (before such paintings cracked and fell to the floor).

Subsequent Alterations to the Plan of the South Palace

After a significant period of continuous use, the large audience hall of the South Palace was abandoned and fell into disrepair. The excavated evidence suggests that the building was probably remodelled at the beginning of Period II, simultaneously with the erection of the Thirty-Columned Hall, and the introduction of the peristyle court in the Great Palace. With the Thirty-Columned Hall providing a new, still more capacious venue for formal audiences and feasts, it suddenly made no sense to attempt to revive the role of the relatively narrow ten-columned audience hall of the South Palace as a major place of assembly – and, for a very considerable period of time, the entire structure appears to have been used as a major wine storage facility.

At this time the original floor was thickened and re-plastered and more than a hundred large wine jars (Armenian *karas*) were installed within the building. In addition, the walls of this extensive roofed space were re-plastered and whitewashed, and certain of the inscribed column bases were apparently removed for use elsewhere.

It is also of interest that the large jars (or pithoi) that were found at Erebuni were frequently found to carry short cuneiform inscriptions. Such inscriptions indicate that each of the pithoi at Erebuni could contain between 3 *akarkhi* and 7 *akarkhi* 4 *terusi* of liquid. Based on Piotrovsky's study of multiple inscribed pithoi from Karmir-Blur, one *akarkhi* was found to be equivalent to 240–250 litres and one *terusi* proved to be equivalent to one-tenth of an *akarkhi*.[51] Based on the mean volume of a pithos from Erebuni that was equivalent to 5.2 *akarkhi* and on the total number of pithoi that could have been expected to stand in the wine storage hall, we may conclude that a total quantity of up to 125,000 litres of wine (i.e. an amount equivalent to 167,000 modern bottles of wine) could have been stored in this single storage unit at any one time during Period II.

In one reading of this latter evidence, Hovhannisyan at one time suggested that, since the conversion of the South Palace into a wine storage facility was likely to have been contemporaneous with the construction of the Thirty-Columned Hall, and since (in his opinion) the Thirty-Columned Hall could only be Achaemenid in date, Urartian pithoi (with Urartian inscriptions) must have continued to be produced in the vicinity of the Ararat plain in the Achaemenid period.[52] Needless to say, there is no reason to think that this was the case.

At the same time Demskaya was able to record a layer of burnt debris that covered the numerous pithoi in the nearly 40 m-long hall of the South Palace. In other words, the roof of this impressive storage unit may very well have been consumed by the flames of the same fire that also left its mark on the peristyle court and on the *susi* of Iwarsha at the end of Period II.

In the course of Period III – during Erebuni's lengthy, final period of occupation – the upper parts of many of the pithoi were sliced off and large fragments of pottery were then mixed with stones in order to block certain of the doorways that had once served the antechambers. In this way not a few of the antechambers were converted into modest, individual dwellings during this last phase of local settlement at Erebuni.

[51] Piotrovsky 1959, 145. But *cf.* also Salvini 2010, 38.
[52] Hovhannisyan 1980, 49.

'The Little Fire Temple'

One further building that has to be included in the list of constructions that tell us at least something of the history of the citadel at Erebuni is the so-called Little Fire Temple: a building which might be more objectively referred to as the 'building with mud-brick struts'. A compact mud-brick structure, *ca.* 12 × 8 m in size, it documents the earliest use of curved vaulting struts in any region situated immediately to the north of the Median homeland in central western Iran. Located in the north-east corner of the central court of the citadel (Fig. 3 and Fig. 4.12), and excavated during Hovhannisyan's 1957–58 season, this structure is exceptional in many ways. Its mud-brick walls were erected, for example, without stone socles (even if the walls in question still reached a height of *ca.* 2 m at the time of their discovery). It is notable, moreover, that this compact three-roomed building possesses a rare stepped plan (Fig. 4.12) and that, while its north wall was built up against the south perimeter wall of the Great Palace, its east wall appears to have rested against the westernmost wall of the former South Palace. Also, since the floor of this anomalous structure stands at a higher level than the original floor of the central court, it is probably safe to suggest that it was one of the last major structures to be erected at Erebuni, perhaps towards the middle years of Period II.

Although it is not exactly certain why Hovhannisyan chose to call this structure the Little Fire Temple, he may well have done so because he thought it ought to be related, at least in general terms, to the rather baffling mud-brick remains in the former peristyle court of the Great Palace that he had already associated with an Achaemenid Fire Temple. But even if no trace of a fire altar was ever detected in the 'Little Fire Temple', Hovhannisyan's provocative label has at least served to draw renewed attention to this unusual structure.

That is to say that, while the architectural details of this building are far from consistently represented in Hovhannisyan's various site plans (*cf.* Figs. 2 and 3), the stepped plan of the building (Fig. 4.12) can be compared with certain elements of the plan of the Old Western Building – a building that was indeed equipped at one time with a fire altar – at the Median site of Tepe Nush-i Jan in western Iran.[53] Further, the reconstructed appearance of the largest room, replete with tall arched niches in two of its walls (Fig. 20), is at least faintly reminiscent of certain of the characteristics of the principal chamber in the Old Western Building (even if the wall niches in this latter room were decidedly smaller in scale and would seem to have always had pointed arches).[54]

[53] Stronach and Roaf 2007, fig. 3.1.
[54] Stronach and Roaf 2007, pl. 31c.

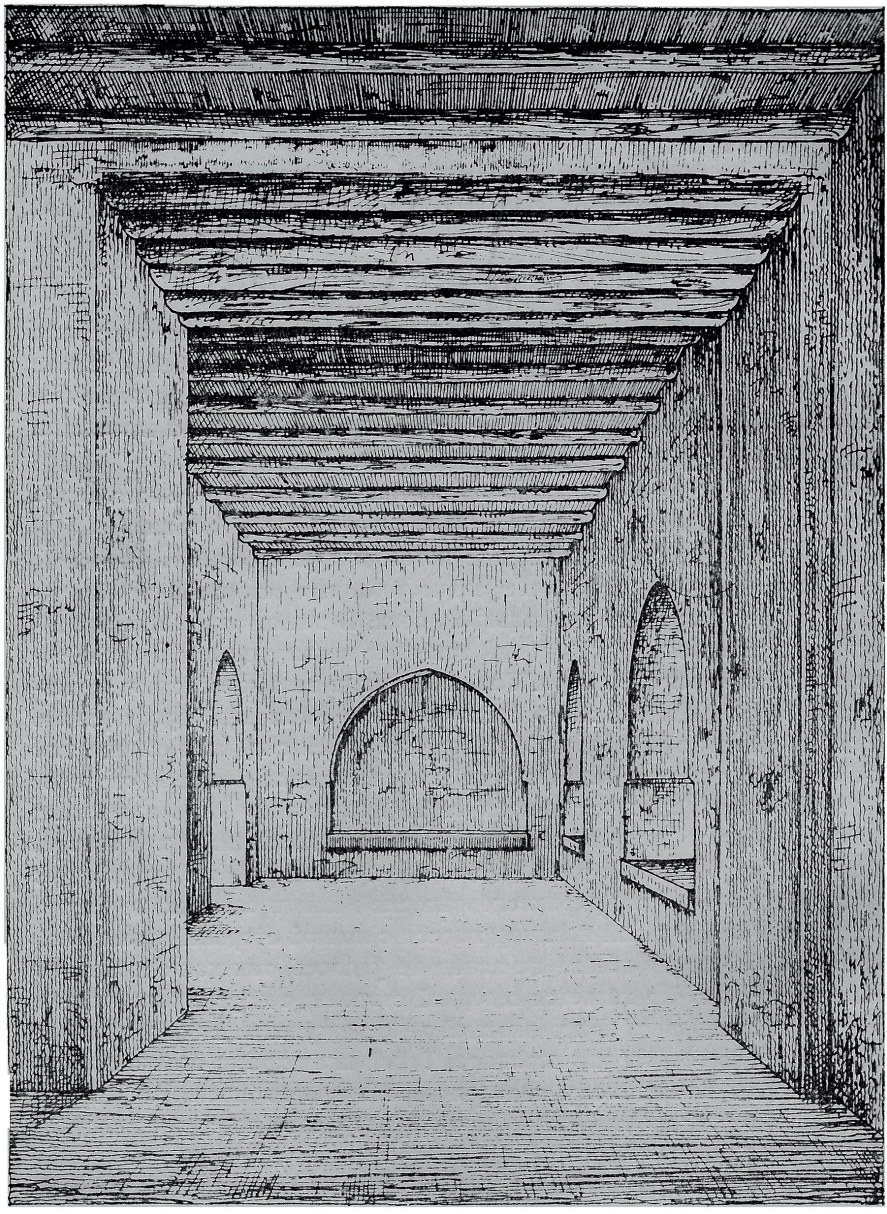

Fig. 20. A reconstruction of part of the interior of the largest room of Erebuni's Period II 'building with mud-brick struts' (after Hovhannisyan 1961, fig. 53).

But, more than anything else, the excavations that took place at Tepe Nush-i Jan in the 1960s and the 1970s were able to demonstrate the fact that the mud-brick architecture of the Medes made extensive use of innovative, slightly curved mud-brick struts[55] – and, from one of Hovhannisyan's photographs taken during his excavations at Erebuni in the late 1950s, it is evident that mud-brick elements of this same kind were used (in opposed sets of five curved struts) to create crucial parts of the large wall niches in the main room of this 'building with mud-brick struts'.[56]

Finally, it cannot be ignored that the floors of all three of the rooms of this enigmatic construction (Fig. 4.12) proved to be covered with a layer of ash that was 0.15 m thick. In sum, the active life of this singular structure would seem to have been brought to an end by the same conflagration that destroyed substantial parts of the adjacent Great Palace and the adjacent South Palace at the end of Period II.

A Chronological Framework for Erebuni in the 1st Millennium BC

Given what is known of ancient Erebuni at the present time, it is possible to identify three principal periods of occupation. In chronological order these intervals can be defined – in strictly brief terms – as follows:

Period I. This interval represents a period of unbroken, direct Urartian rule that lasted from *ca*. 782 BC to a date in the latter part of the 7th century BC when the important neighbouring site of Karmir-Blur was attacked and destroyed. In archaeological and historical terms, this period can also be sub-divided into phases Ia, Ib and Ic (see below).

Period II. This second main period of occupation most probably dates from the late 7th century BC to *ca*. 521 BC when Darius defeated the Armenians in a series of fierce encounters near the beginning of his reign. Overall, Period II is a time of flux and change which seems to document, among other things, various elements of a late Urartian revival at Erebuni as well as a hitherto unrecognised but significant moment when Median (or Median-related) influences were suddenly in evidence. In our view this interval may also include the earliest period of Achaemenid rule (between *ca*. 550 and *ca*. 521 BC): a period that does not seem to have left any very clear trace of construction on the Rock of Erebuni.

[55] On the widespread use of curved struts at Tepe Nush-i Jan, see Stronach and Roaf 2007, 190–91.

[56] Hovhannisyan 1961, pl. 57.

Period III. This third period of occupation would seem to have lasted from late in the 6th century BC down to say, a date late in the 4th century BC. That is to say that Period III appears to have been coincided with much of the duration of Achaemenid Persian rule in the Near East. In physical terms, however, relatively few signs of local construction at Erebuni can be detected during this not inconsiderable interval.

Period Ia (782/775–730 BC)

When we look at the above-mentioned phases of occupation in greater detail, it is evident that Period Ia – an interval that dates from the foundation of Erebuni down to the end of the reign of Sarduri II – is a defining moment in the history of the site. In particular, it equates with a flurry of intense building activity that was extensively commemorated in monumental cuneiform inscriptions commissioned by Argishti I and his son, Sarduri II.

In contrast to the character of many late Urartian citadels and fortresses that were founded in the first half of the 7th century BC (and which often seem to have consisted of sprawling two-storied constructions), the monumental architecture of Period Ia at Erebuni is characterised by the presence of recognisable palatial or religious precincts that were bordered on the ground by either processional routes, open spaces or partly buttressed perimeter walls (Fig. 1). At the same time it also has to be conceded, especially with reference to the Great Palace of Argishti, that the possible role of privileged, second floor accommodations has so far attracted little serious notice.

Beginning in Period Ia, stones of both basalt and tuff were used for foundations and to create markedly strong, weatherproof socles for the site's tall mud-brick walls. Such stone socles proved to be of variable height, and in the case of certain of the external defensive walls the socles alone could rise to a height of 6 m or more.

In one low-lying, relatively vulnerable area to the east of the main gate, it is also of interest that the outer (southern) wall of a still extant portion of a double-walled line of defence (Fig. 3) is characterised by a number of more or less uniform external buttresses that are from 5.00 to 5.25 m in frontal width, that they protrude from the main face of the wall for anything from 0.90 to 1.10 m, and that they stand – at least in this one specific area – at a distance of 6.30 m from one another.

The quarried stones at Erebuni were detached from locally available sources of rock in anything from small to large sizes – and most of the smaller stones were utilised with little if any further dressing. Large, more or less smoothly

dressed cubic blocks of basalt could be incorporated, most particularly, in walls near the entrances to major buildings, where certain finely smoothed, sometimes inscribed stone blocks were left unplastered. A high standard of stone dressing was also reserved for the cylindrical, basalt column bases of Period Ia.[57] In addition, a constant need for wooden architectural elements (not least for columns, beams and doors) would appear to have been met by resorting to such readily available local woods as pine, poplar, oak and beech.

Beginning in Period Ia (and continuing down to at least the end of Period II), the large sun-dried mud bricks at Erebuni were made of local pink to buff clay with admixtures of chaff and grit. Such bricks were principally produced in two sizes: square (47.4 × 47.4 × 12.5 cm) and rectangular (47.4 × 32.3 × 12.5 cm).

A strong, normally light-coloured plaster was regularly applied to both internal and external wall surfaces – and the often considerable depth of such plaster coats can be judged in places from the dramatically protruding plane of inset inscribed stones in Period Ia walls. Wall surfaces were also generally whitewashed or painted a shade of blue – and both painted indoor wall surfaces and partly sheltered external wall surfaces were not seldom characterised by impressive figured scenes that appear to date exclusively from Period Ia.

Period Ib (730–680/670 BC)

During this interval royal building inscriptions suddenly cease to be introduced at Erebuni, even if other signs of the citadel's steadily diminishing importance are not particularly evident. Indeed, the next definite change in Erebuni's fortunes can be seen to have taken place in or near 675 BC, this being the approximate date at which Rusa, the son of Argishti II, founded Teishebaini (better known by its modern name of Karmir-Blur). Rather remarkably, this new seat of Urartian political, administrative and religious authority in the Ararat plain was established only a few kilometres to the south-west of Erebuni, where the core of the new fortress was erected on a high bluff directly above the canyon of the Hrazdan river.

Whatever may have been the exact reasons for the precipitous decline of Erebuni at the end of Period Ib, it is always possible to suppose that an ambitious, even spendthrift new ruler simply chose to put his own personal stamp

[57] For concise remarks on Urartian stone column bases in general, see especially Ter-Martirosov 2001.

on this 'core area' of Urartu's northern territories by founding an entirely new regional capital. However this may be, there is ample archaeological and epigraphic evidence to confirm Erebuni's dramatic loss of status at this time. As has been already indicated, metal offerings commissioned by Argishti I and Sarduri II for the temple of Haldi and other structures at Erebuni were duly transferred to Karmir-Blur.[58] In particular, one decorated shield that was transferred from Erebuni to Karmir-Blur carried the following text in two copies:

> To (God) Haldi , the Lord, this shield Argishti Minua's son
> has dedicated for (the city of) Erebuni. Argishti is
> the king powerful, the king great, the king of Biainian (countries),
> master of (city) Tushpa, the City.[59]

Period Ic (680/670–*ca*. 610 BC)

Despite the dramatic ascendance of the new site of Karmir-Blur, Erebuni was far from wholly abandoned or left without any economic importance.[60] Even if Erebuni's population is likely to have declined to some extent in Period Ic, evidence for continued settlement is reflected, not least, in certain stratified ceramic assemblages that were discovered a few years ago in the south and east passages that flank the temple of Haldi. Here, for example, the local Urartian pottery of mid- to late 7th-century date is distinguishable from that of Periods Ia and Ib.[61] In addition, the Franco-Armenian Archaeological Mission was able to expose the foundations of a modest building of Period Ic date that was built up against the eastern edge of the north terrace (before this same small building was eventually levelled in preparation for the construction of the large Thirty-Columned Hall early in Period II). This short-lived Ic structure, which only contained relatively small-sized stones in its wall foundations,[62] may also have been at least partly contemporary with the short-lived extramural settlement on the south-east hill at Erebuni.[63]

[58] *Cf*. Piotrovsky 1952, 51; 1955, 27–28; 1966, 3–5; Israyelyan 1971, 171–84; *CTU* B8-2; B8-3; B8-4; B8-5; B8-6; B8-7; B8-21.
[59] *CTU* B8-3. The name of the city in this text is spelled *Erbuni*.
[60] *Cf*. Yesayan 1967, 15.
[61] Personal information from S. Deschamps and F. Fichet de Clairfontaine.
[62] *Cf*. Deschamps and Fichet de Clairfontaine 2014, fig. 8.
[63] For which, see most recently, Stronach *et al*. 2009.

Period II (*ca*. 610–*ca*. 520 BC)

The destruction of Karmir-Blur at some still uncertain date between say, 640 BC[64] and a date towards the end of the 7th century BC appears to have ushered in a new period of prosperity at Erebuni, which once again became a significant centre of administrative authority. The date of this event not only marks the end of direct, unbroken Urartian imperial rule in the Ararat plain, but it may be said to mark the beginning of Period II at Erebuni in the present chronological framework.

Unfortunately, a dearth of written sources complicates the task of establishing an exact date for the violent attack that destroyed Karmir-Blur, let alone the task of determining who was responsible for the destruction of this latter site. Given the numerous non-Urartian bronze trilobate arrowheads that were found lodged in the tall partly mud-brick perimeter walls of Karmir-Blur, it is certainly worth recalling Diakanoff's suggestion that the Medes could have been involved in the attack.[65] While Diakanoff takes the view that Karmir-Blur could have fallen at any time between 630 BC (a commonly agreed date for the death of Assurbanipal, the last significant king of Assyria) and a date near 590 BC, when the Medes could have begun to be preoccupied – at least in keeping with Herodotus' colourful narrative (1. 73–74) – by the increasing power of the Lydians, the present authors prefer to think that the demise of Karmir-Blur probably took place at some moment close to the fall of Nineveh in 612 BC.

With reference to various surviving Urartian influences that can still be detected in Period II, Erebuni's apparent return to a position of political-administrative authority conveys a strong sense of historical and cultural continuity. In addition, the ordinary population in the citadel would not necessarily seem to have changed too greatly following the collapse of the Urartian empire. The *susi* temple of the local god Iwarsha appears to have remained a focal point of worship; and, from the fact that the west wall of the Thirty-Columned Hall was allowed to retain its original wall-paintings, a continuing measure of respect for the time-honoured worship of Haldi (perhaps affirmed by the location of the stepped mud-brick altar) may be detectable. It is also possible to mention the continued production of pottery that is still broadly similar to earlier Urartian pottery, even if the ceramic assemblage as a whole also begins to display a number of new types and features.[66]

[64] *Cf*. Kroll 1984.

[65] Diakanoff 1956, 318. Note, too, that similar bronze trilobate arrowheads were lodged in, or scattered near, the external mud-brick walls of Fort Shalmaneser (Stronach, personal observation), almost certainly as a result of the Median attack on Nimrud in 614 BC.

[66] For at least one possible indication that a limited number of Median-related ceramic forms began to reach parts of the Ararat plain at a date near 600 BC, see N. Tiratsyan 2010, 135, n. 2 and figs. 6, 8.

In architectural terms, however, it is particularly important to stress that Period II witnesses the introduction of totally new architectural forms in the very heart of the fortress at Erebuni. At a time when the prestige of the Medes must have risen to new heights following the fall of Nineveh, certain of the principal features of the Thirty-Columned Hall (including the introduction of a rectangular columned structure with five rows of six wooden columns, the specific nature of the column bases, and the presence of a prominent mud-brick bench) would each seem to reflect the new prevalence of Median tastes and innovations. In addition, in an intriguing *structural* departure in Period II, the 'building with mud-brick struts' documents the first known use of curved mud-brick vaulting struts – a very conceivable Median invention – in any region located immediately to the north of the Median homeland in western Iran.

In view of the foregoing architectural evidence, the present authors suggest that at least part of Period II deserves to be thought of as an interval of possible Median control (or at least strong Median influence) in the area of the Ararat plain, whether or not the 'Medes' in question already thought of themselves as distinct in certain ways from other Medes located in the vicinity of Hamadan. To put matters another way, Erebuni in Period II could either have been an outlying possession of the Medes who ruled from Hamadan (i.e. Erebuni could provide at least minimal evidence for the possible beginnings of a Median empire) or, in another possible reconstruction of events, the Ararat plain could have become home to newcomers to the region who felt drawn to the newly prestigious 'Median ways': ways that were expressed by such things as horse-riding, certain types of horse-riding costume and certain types of weaponry, not to mention new, distinct forms of regional architecture.[67]

With reference to the abrupt end of Period II, the nature of the evidence from Erebuni is of special interest. If there are reasons for supposing that Cyrus the Great could have more or less peacefully 'inherited' the region of the Ararat plain following his overthrow of Astyages, the last king of Media, in 550 BC, it would seem unlikely that the many signs of fire and destruction that mark the end of Period II would have been the work of his forces at the moment that they took formal possession of Erebuni. It is much more probable, in fact, that the attack on the citadel that appears to have spelled the end of Period II should be attributed to the forces of Darius I in the aftermath of Darius' five recorded engagements against the Armenians near the beginning of his reign.[68]

[67] For a suggestion that elements of the Period II population at Erebuni could be thought of as Early Arminaian/Armenian, see especially Areshian 2016, 92.

[68] This may also be said to be consistent with the latest, very probably correct suggestion that, in all probability, Cyrus marched with his army to Lydia rather than to Urartu in or near 547 BC. *Cf.* Zawadski 2010, 147, n. 27.

Period III (Late 6th century BC to Late 4th century BC)

Activities of Achaemenid date at Erebuni would seem to have been chiefly concentrated in the neighbourhood of the *susi* temple. Here, as has already been noted, two 1/16 staters (Figs. 21–22), minted in Miletus before 494 BC, would seem to constitute one relatively early affirmation of such activities. At the same time Hovhannisyan's conviction that the Thirty-Columned Hall was a Persian apadana of mid-Achaemenid date did more than a little to inspire a perception that the venerable citadel at Erebuni was nothing less than the satrapal seat of the 18th satrapy of the Achaemenid empire.[69]

Fig. 21. A 1/16 (silver) stater, minted at Miletus before 494 BC and recovered near the doorway of the *susi* temple (photograph courtesy of the Museum of History of Armenia, Yerevan; MHA no. 17541/1).

Fig. 22. A 1/16 (silver) stater, minted at Miletus before 494 BC and recovered near the doorway of the *susi* temple (photograph courtesy of the Museum of History of Armenia, Yerevan; MHA no. 17541/2).

[69] *Cf.* G. Tiratsyan 1998, 24–26.

It is remarkable, in fact, that Hovhannisyan's distinctly late date for the rectangular Thirty-Columned Hall remained unchallenged until only a few years ago.[70] Indeed, when one thinks of the finely dressed bell-shaped stone column bases that are now known from a number of 5th century and later Achaemenid sites in the South Caucasus,[71] it is difficult to think of any major building that could have been erected within a closely corresponding interval at Erebuni.

Hovhannesyan does his best to make the most of the small number of objects of Achaemenid date (or possible Achaemenid date) that were encountered during his excavations, but the material in question is very limited and it is especially limited where pottery of this date is concerned. Accordingly, it is tempting to suppose that the largely secure conditions that obtained in the Ararat plain from near the beginning of Period III onwards, provided an opportunity for the local seat of satrapal authority in Achaemenid times to move down to the banks of one of the principal rivers in the region, where a network of carefully tended gardens presumably enhanced the amenities of a state-of-the-art satrapal palace.[72]

In the meantime the one specific exception to this latter-day picture of gradual, final decline at Erebuni remains, as far as one can see, in the immediate vicinity of the *susi* temple. It can only be a matter for conjecture, but the fact that a significant hoard of silver vessels of Achaemenid or near-Achaemenid date chanced to be found in a clearly secondary context in the plain below the location of the *susi* temple very possibly indicates that a treasury associated with the temple remained in use down to a date late in the 4th century BC.

[70] *Cf.* Stronach *et al*. 2010, 120, n. 1.

[71] See, for example, Stronach *et al*. 2010, 126, n. 1. Also, for notes on the well-attested attributes of an Achaemenid Persian apadana (a type of audience hall that was distinguished, not least, by its freestanding design and its tall columned porticoes on three of its four sides), see Stronach 1985.

[72] In this latter context it is not without interest to recall that Khorenatsi (*Movsisi Khorenatswoy Patmut'iwn hayots* = Moses of Khorene's *Armenian History*), ed. M. Abeghian and S. Harut'yunian [Tiflis 1913]) refers (in Book 1, chapter 20) to a sycamore grove planted at Armavir for purposes of divination by seers at a time 'following Semiramis'.

APPENDIX I

The Murals of Erebuni

The wall-paintings from the citadel of Erebuni compose today the largest, most diverse and informative collection of monumental Urartian art of this kind. All the paintings from Erebuni date to Period Ia, and are therefore representative of an Urartian imperial art form (Figs. 10, 23–24) that flourished during the reigns of Argishti I and Sarduri II.[73] Painted interiors, sometimes decorated with ornamental patterns and figurative scenes, were frequently found in the more important rooms at Erebuni. Fragments of such wall-paintings were found, for example, inside various buildings in the southern part of the citadel; in the outer courtyard of the Great Palace of Argishti I and on the walls of the *susi* temple of Iwarsha. In three cases, moreover, on both sides of the long M3 wall, in the audience hall of the Great Palace and in the large audience hall of the South (or Second) Palace of Argishti, the fragments were large enough to reconstruct substantial parts of large-scale pictorial compositions. In the columned arcade (or hall) of the temple of Haldi (on the east side of the M3 wall) and in the audience hall of the Great Palace portions of these murals were still preserved on the walls at the time of the excavations, while in other locations, fragments of paintings were discovered lying on the floor amidst other fallen debris.

The quality of the paintings that are found at Erebuni indisputably indicates that they were the work of skilled artists, who were provided with all the necessary equipment to carry out the tasks that were expected of them. A variety of paints were employed, based on mineral and organic dyes and pigments. Most of the organic dyes have left only faint traces. The colour schemes are known to have included blue, azure, red, pink, ochre, yellow, green, black and white.

Although no adequate spectrophotometric study of the wall-paintings at Erebuni was ever undertaken, it is evident that gypsum was used to produce white, charcoal was used to produce black, and iron oxide was used to produce red paint. In several instances still other information is available. First, a coat of relatively coarse clay usually covered the stone and mudbrick walls. Secondly, a coat of fine white gypsum plaster often served as an actual ground for the paintings as such – and it is apparent that circles, lines and other geometric configurations were outlined by gentle impressions while the plastered surface was still wet. Then, within these spaces, the outlines of individual images were drawn in red paint, after which the surfaces within the red outlines were filled with one or another monochromatic paint. There is no evidence for any mixing of paints of different colours and any slight variety in tone was achieved by an intensification of the density of the paint through the application of several layers of the same paint.[74]

Within the environs of the temple of Haldi, the painted design on the east side of the M3 wall was formed by a series of horizontal friezes arranged one above the other. Towards the top of the wall, a large frieze depicting circular rosettes on a blue background may have represented the night sky. Below this frieze, a tall, dominant frieze would appear to have reflected the special religious affiliations of this part of the site.

[73] Text of this Appendix by G. Areshian.
[74] Hovhannisyan 1973, 38–39.

Fig. 23. Fragment of a restored wall-painting from the audience hall of the Great Palace. Bulls resting on one knee face each other on opposite sides of a concave-sided square (photograph courtesy of the Museum of History of Armenia, Yerevan).

The frieze in question can be seen to have included at least one depiction of Haldi standing on a lion (Fig. 10). Other smaller friezes depict pairs of human figures worshipping before a sacred tree; palmettos; architectural battlements; rosettes; a row of hanging pomegranates; and long lines of young, sacrificial goats.[75] The contents

[75] *Cf.* Hovhannisyan 1973, 50–53 and pls. 45–48.

Fig. 24. Fragment of a wall-painting from the audience hall of the South Palace. Following the completion of a royal hunt, one of the king's prized chariot-horses is released from its duties (after Hovhannisyan 1973, pl. 35).

of these latter wall-paintings most likely related to the semiotics of sacrificial rituals performed in the temple of Haldi.

The general composition of the wall-paintings found in the audience hall of the Great Palace was similar to the composition of the paintings found in the vicinity of the temple of Haldi, i.e. it consisted of a series of horizontal friezes, separated from one another by narrow, decorative bands, positioned one above the other. The narrow decorative bands consisted of very similar pictorial elements to those that were found in the precincts of the temple of Haldi, except that the sacrificial, white kids were not illustrated. One other difference between the wall-paintings of these two buildings is that the upper edge of the principal frieze in the audience hall was placed at an elevation of 1.70 m above the floor, i.e. at the height of the human eye. Framed at the top and the bottom by less tall decorative bands, the main frieze was characterised by three components. Its centre was occupied by concave-sided square configurations within each of which was a large rosette with blue and red petals drawn on a circular gold background. In addition, sacred animals are depicted on two of the opposed sides of each concave-sided square. In one format, a pair of gold-coloured, striding lions face each other with menacingly open jaws, bared teeth, wrinkled snouts and raised tails. A second group of panels depicts bulls with large horns. The bulls are shown resting on one knee and in each case they face each other on opposed sides of a concave-sided square (Fig. 23). Above this 'lion-and-bull frieze', a second, much taller frieze extended upwards. Only a few fragments of this latter composition were identified with certainty and conserved during the excavations, which means that we can no longer offer a reliable reconstruction of the entire design. Nevertheless the fragments in question (including the representation of a large anthropomorphic eye, large wings and a larger-than-life-sized hand) would strongly suggest that the upper frieze once contained compositions that included large human or divine figures. Considering the size of the audience hall of the South Palace, and assuming that the walls were decorated to a minimal height of about 4.0 m, we can estimate that the total surface area of the paintings that once covered the walls of this large hall would have amounted to *ca*. 500 m^2.

The murals in the large audience hall of the South Palace are, in fact, somewhat different in content and style from those associated with the temple of Haldi and the audience hall of the Great Palace. Thus the religious-mythological themes presented in the friezes of the South Palace include a major procession of anthropomorphic divinities. Each of these male divinities is equipped with a horned headdress and holds a branch of a sacred tree in his right hand and a situla in his left. The composition also appears to have included striding winged sphinxes, divinities standing beside concave-sided squares, and pairs of bulls intended for sacrifice.

At the same time it is striking that there are further images taken from the daily life of both humans and animals. Although only preserved in fragments, there are clear depictions of shepherds driving flocks of sheep, dogs watching over animals, and scenes from the royal hunt in which chariots, horses (Fig. 24), and hunted leopards all appear. Especially impressive are fragments of naturalistic landscapes, particularly a painting of a young bull calf scratching his shoulder with the hoof of a hind leg while he stands in a marsh with thickets of reeds depicted in the background.

The present analysis reveals several characteristic traits of Urartian monumental painting in the 8th century BC. In particular, we may note the difference between the representations of sacred religious imagery and depictions of daily life. All religious imagery is strictly canonical, schematised and symbolic: it conveys a feeling of the

immutable world of the sacred by means of a distinctively static presentation of movement. Divinities and heraldic figures often seem to be frozen in a specific pose. Conversely, the imagery presenting aspects of human and animal life can be naturalistic, full of dynamism, demonstrating a substantial degree of freedom from the established artistic canon. Furthermore, the different scales of the figures that are shown in landscape paintings might not only be said to reflect differences in the perceived importance of the depicted objects, but it might also be taken to illustrate an incipient grasp of perspective in Urartian painting of the 8th century BC.

In conclusion, there is little doubt that the Erebuni murals of Period Ia were strongly influenced by – and replicated stylistic features of – Neo-Assyrian palatial art, especially from the time of Shalmaneser III (859–824 BC) onwards. At the same time, however, we have to be aware of compositional and iconographic departures from Assyrian prototypes that can be assumed to have had separate, individual meanings in the imagery of Urartu.

APPENDIX II

Three Achaemenid Silver Rhyta from Erebuni[76]

If we exclude the above-mentioned two silver coins (Figs. 21–22) from Miletus, which were found close to the entrance to the *susi* temple during Hovhannisyan's excavations,[77] there is relatively little evidence that can be used to support the continued use of the citadel at Erebuni during the Achaemenid period. As it happens, however, the chance discovery (in 1968) of a small but significant group of silver objects that had been partly folded and subsequently secreted in a large ceramic jar near the base of the western slope of the citadel mound[78] can be used to confirm the very probable existence of a final period of occupation that lasted, not least in the vicinity of the *susi* temple (and in the vicinity of a presumably still functioning treasury), through the greater part of the 5th and 4th centuries BC.

In all, the hoard consisted of three silver rhyta, a plain silver goblet and a fifth now missing silver object. While the plain goblet with a hemispherical body and a long neck (with a secondary hole in the lower part of the vessel from which wine could issue) cannot be dated too closely,[79] this is not entirely the case with reference to the three rhyta. Between them, the latter vessels can be used to illustrate certain changes in local drinking habits that would appear to have taken place between the first half of the 5th century BC down to the end of the Achaemenid period in 330 BC[80] or, just possibly, down to a very slightly later date.[81]

[76] Text by D. Stronach.
[77] Personal information from G. Areshian.
[78] *Cf.* Arakelian 1971, 143.
[79] See, for example, Arakelian 1971, 151; Hacatrian and Markarian 2003, 15–16 with fig. 5.
[80] Treister 2015.
[81] Hacatrian and Markarian 2003.

1. *A silver rhyton from Erebuni witj a horse protome*

This classic example of an Achaemenid bent rhyton is composed, as Ter-Martirosov[82] first indicated, of two parts soldered together (Fig. 25). The protome includes the head, chest and folded forelegs of a finely modelled horse. The realism with which the head is depicted extends to the pricked ears, flaring nostrils and open mouth. The front of the mane is arranged in a fringe that covers most of the forehead. Elsewhere, the rest of the long mane falls evenly on each side of the neck. While the horse's metal cheek-pieces are prominently displayed, the straps of the headstall are just barely indicated (seemingly by the lines of small roundels that can be understood to have decorated them).

As was often the case when a stallion of distinction was depicted in the reliefs of the Apadana at Persepolis, a separate lower strap served to support a single bell at the mid-point of the chest. Note also that, in keeping with a well-known Achaemenid sculptural convention, the musculature of the thighs is represented by a characteristic 'tulip pattern'. Beyond this, a circular opening at the base of the horse's deep chest now marks the point where wine would have originally issued from a short tubular spout;[83] and, while the greater part of the horn is characterised by vertical fluting, a contrasting, plain horizontal register appears just below the rim.

Fig. 25. A silver rhyton from Erebuni with a horse protome (photograph courtesy of the Erebuni Museum).

[82] Ter-Martirosov 1996, 197.
[83] Stronach 2011, 256.

2. *A silver rhyton from Erebuni with a horse-and-rider motif*

This second rhyton from Erebuni has no exact parallel. While the horn has a plain, undecorated surface, the lower part of the vessel depicts a rider of noble rank mounted on what was surely intended to represent a horse of quality (Figs. 26–27). From the graphic depiction of the rider's heavy frame, it is hard to imagine that a 'generic horseman' is depicted, and it is tempting to suppose that we are dealing with something close to a portrait of a once important local personage. As a number of prior commentators have pointed out, this immaculately groomed, elegantly accoutred individual could well have been a satrap or a person of comparable rank.[84] Indeed, the rider's relatively long beard with up to five rows of curls could have alluded to his royal or near-royal lineage.

As far as the rider's dress is concerned, he is clad – except for his distinctive helmet – in the eminently practical riding dress of an armed Achaemenid noble. This was an esteemed form of dress, it is worth recalling, that was worn, not least in the reliefs at Persepolis, by Persians, Medes, Armenians and Cappadocians. It is a type of dress, in other words, that can no longer be associated with the Medes alone;[85] and it may serve

Fig. 26. A detail of the lower portion of the silver rhyton from Erebuni with a horse-and-rider motif (drawing by T. Nersesyan; University of California at Berkeley Expedition to Erebuni).

[84] G. Tiratsyan 1988, 53; Ter-Martirosov 1996, 198; Hacatrian and Markarian 2003, 12.
[85] *Cf.* Stronach 2009, 220–22; Roaf 2012, 211–12.

Fig. 27. A silver rhyton from Erebuni with a horse-and-rider motif (photograph courtesy of the Erebuni Museum).

to remind us (especially if we project this sartorial observation back into the first half of the 6th century BC) that the 'Medes' of this date in the Ararat plain may have thought of themselves as being at least loosely associated with the Medes of the Median homeland in the vicinity of Hamadan.

As to the likely age of the silver rhyton with a horse protome, this doubtless long-lived form could well date from anywhere in the first half of the 5th century BC down to *ca*. 330 BC. On the other hand the design of the second silver rhyton, with its barely concealed hints of high political ambition, could either date from *ca*. 400 BC to *ca*. 330 BC (when Achaemenid stipulations prohibiting the production of all equestrian sculpture that was not directly associated with the Achaemenid royal house were beginning to lose their force)[86] or to a moment that was not too far removed from the ultimate collapse of Achaemenid authority.

3. *A partially gilt silver calf-headed cup from Erebuni*

A third important vessel that would appear to have come from this 'unexcavated' silver hoard from the close environs of Erebuni consists of an animal-headed, partially gilt silver cup with prominent figured decoration (Figs. 28–29). In the context of the present discussion, the principal interest of the piece may be said to reside in the interpretation of the festive scene that is depicted on the vessel's compact horn and the still more relevant, approximate date of the vessel's manufacture.

With reference to the participants in the featured festivities, these can be seen to include a single male and three females. The main protagonist is clearly the mature, bearded individual who sits on a richly decorated throne at the heart of the composition. Among other evident intimations of authority, he holds a staff in his left hand and

Fig. 28. The figured scene on an animal-headed, partially gilt silver cup from Erebuni (drawing by T. Nersesyan).

[86] *Cf*. Boardman 2000, 134; Stronach 2011, 263.

Fig. 29. An animal-headed, partially gilt silver cup from Erebuni with figured decoration on the horn (photograph courtesy of the Erebuni Museum).

is about to be handed a bowl of wine. Also, as the probable arbiter of the music chosen for the occasion, he can be seen to turn his head in order to catch the strains of the melody emanating from the instrument closest to him.

The dress of the female attendant, who holds a wine-filled phiale is characterised by an intriguing combination of both Attic and Achaemenid elements. While the ends of the vertical folds in the upper part of her dress possess a Greek appearance, the lower part of this same individual's costume would seem to exhibit the kind of diagonal folds that are a recurrent feature in almost all depictions of Achaemenid court dress.

A female musician, who stands at the extreme right-hand edge of the scene, is shown playing double pipes. Such pipes have a long history in the Near East, but relevant models for the pose of the present performer would seem to stem more or less directly from the realm of Greek painting, especially in the early 4th century BC.[87]

Finally, a second female musician – on the left margin of the composition – sits on a chair and plays a lyre. The expression on her face, and the carriage of her head, do much to capture her total absorption in the music. In contrast, however, to the revealing costume of the other female celebrants, the ankle-length, partly gilded dress of this particular participant exhibits a loose, generous cut.

With reference to certain prior estimations of the date – and the possible origins – of this third silver vessel, Tiratsyan[88] opts for an Achaemenid date and an Ionian workshop. Boardman[89] also points to a likely Achaemenid date for the piece and concludes that it is 'surely from the west'. Among other estimates of the date of the deposition of the hoard, Ter-Martirosov and Deschamps[90] suggest an Achaemenid date within the 4th century BC; Treister[91] supports a date no later than *ca*. 330 BC, i.e. at a time that coincides with the fall of the Achaemenid empire; and Hacatrian and Markarian[92] suggest a date late in the 4th or early in the 3rd century BC. As for my own current estimate, it is perhaps closest to Treister's verdict.

Although the subject matter of the figured scene has inspired a wide range of speculation, this is not a matter that requires prolonged exploration in the present context. It is perhaps sufficient to indicate that most commentators either take the view that the main protagonist is Asclepius accompanied by his wife and daughters or Dionysus accompanied by three of his maenads. In either case, this third rhyton almost certainly represents the latest object of quality that can be associated with one of Urartu's more enduring and celebrated citadels.

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[87] Stronach 2011, 267.
[88] G. Tiratsyan 1988, 54–55.
[89] Boardman 2000, 187.
[90] Ter-Martirosov and Deschamps 2007, 70.
[91] Treister 2015.
[92] Hacatrian and Markarian 2003, 20.

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KARMIR-BLUR

Yervand GREKYAN

Piotrovsky Boris became old and flaccid;
he got bored by researching the records.
It's impossible to excavate Karmir Blur
to perfection – abandon your efforts![1]

Abstract

The ancient site of Karmir-Blur lies on the outskirts of modern Yerevan, on the fertile Ararat plain in Armenia, which was named 'the land of the Waza(eans)' in Urartian cuneiform sources and once formed a part of the confederation of the 'lands of Etiuni'. The history of the site dates back to the 13th–12th centuries BC, when it was occupied by an Early Iron Age settlement. Urartians appeared here by the end of the 9th century BC, conquered the Ararat plain and burnt down its settlements including the Early Iron Age site at Karmir-Blur. After some time of abandonment a small fortress or fortified road station was built there as a part of fortification system controlling the main route from Erebuni to Argishtihinili, the two major Urartian sites in Ararat plain at that time.

The name of Rusa son of Argishti, king of Urartu (the first half of the 7th century BC) is known in Urartian studies as a reformer and builder king. The establishment of a new administrative centre in the Ararat plain, 'the city of Teisheba of the land of Waza', was the first major city-building project realised by that king. The new city was built just in the place of the ancient settlement. It occupied an area of about 40 ha and had a population of a few thousand people at most. The city carried important administrative, economic and religious functions, was a house of state archives, and served as a place for state reserves. Life in the city was interrupted after dramatic events within the kingdom of Urartu at some time during the second half of the 7th century BC. The city was invaded by an enemy, who used so-called 'Scythian-type' arrowheads and was burnt down completely. The site was abandoned once more to be populated again from the early mediaeval period onwards.

[1] A fragment from poem written by Boris Piotrovsky, memorised by one of his students, Gregory Areshian. See Areshian 2008, 152.

The History of Research

In the *History of Armenia*, written by Armenian Catholicos Hovhannes Drasxanakerttsi in AD 898–929, a farmstead named Kavakert is mentioned, located on the bank of Hurastan river; it belonged to the catholicate and was surrounded by 'large and beautiful' farms.[2] The name of the settlement, which existed until the 19th century, literally means 'clay built'. It is located in the south-western part of present Yerevan, on the left bank of the Hrazdan, within the territory of an ancient site, which became famous in Urartology as Karmir-Blur.

Study of the territory of Karmir-Blur started in 1927 and in 1929 the whole area of the site was declared a closed archaeological zone. Work at the site recommenced in 1936 (Fig. 1). In the same year, the pupils of the school in Verin Charbagh village (now one of the suburbs of modern Yerevan) found

Fig. 1. Karmir-Blur, general view to the citadel (photograph by author).

[2] Yovhannu Kat'oɫikosi Drasxaanakertc'woy *Patmut'iwn Hayoc'* (translation into modern Armenian and commenteries by G.B. Tosunyan [Yerevan 1996]), 115.

a stone fragment inscribed in cuneiform among collapsed stones near the walls of the mediaeval church built within the territory of Karmir-Blur. That inscription was taken to the Museum of History of Armenia by a worker of the Geological Administration of the Armenian SSR, A.P. Demyokhin. This is why archaeologists focused their attention on the excavations of Karmir-Blur. Systematic excavation of the city began in 1939 with three different expeditions within a single collaborative project. The expedition of the Armenian Branch of the Soviet Academy of Sciences was supervised by S.V. Ter-Avetisyan (1940–41), that of the Committee for the Preservation of Armenian Historical Monuments by K.G. Ghafadaryan (1939), and that of the State Hermitage Museum by B.B. Piotrovsky (Fig. 2). Work was suspended for the duration of the Second World War, resuming in 1945 due to collaborative efforts of the Institute of History of the Academy of Sciences of Armenia (1945–58), the Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography (1959–71), and State Hermitage (1945–71) under the general supervision of Piotrovsky.[3]

The Ancient Settlement

Already in the Early Iron Age there was a settlement at Karmir-Blur which occupied some 3 ha.[4] The citadel of the settlement was situated on the low upland consisting of basalt sediments that rises above the Hrazdan gorge. The rocks bordering it to the north and north-east slope down vertically to the gorge, and to the east and south-east it is surrounded by shallow depressions. The dwellings of the settlement were partially underground, with 0.75–1.25 m-thick walls, comprised several sections, and had overall a rectangular/square plan (up to 120 m^2). The rooms were primarily situated around a general 'hall' where the hearth of the house was placed, as was a stone idol of the spirit that protected the hearth, placed near the grain pit or storage jar (Fig. 3). The remains of cereals, large quantity of ceramics, iron slag and a 'Transcaucasian type' pole axe mould are vivid evidence of the occupation of local population of the settlement. The necropolis with ground and stone box burials is located outside the settlement.[5]

[3] The excavations of the Karmir-Blur necropolis were recommenced in 2013 by Hakob Simonyan and Simon Hmayakyan. Two excavated burials were dated to the 6th–5th centuries BC.

[4] The site was discovered in 1936, but the systematic excavations began only in 1947 by the Karmir-Blur expedition. A separate group was formed within this expedition for the study of this settlement. In 1947–48 the group works were supervised by A.A. Vayman, in 1948 by K.L. Hovhannisyan, in 1949–50 and 1953–54 by V.S. Sorokin, and in 1955–58 by H.A. Martirosyan.

[5] Martirosyan 1961, 7; 1964, 160.

Fig. 2. From left to right Igor Diakonoff, Boris Piotrovsky, Yevgeny Bayburtyan and Karo Ghafadaryan having a rest during the excavations of Karmir-Blur (courtesy of the History Museum of Armenia).

Fig. 3. A stone idol, Early Iron Age settlement of Karmir-Blur, 13th–12th centuries BC (after S. Harutyunyan 2007, 76, fig. 31).

Urartian Expansion and the Ararat Plain in the 9th–8th Centuries BC

The Ararat plain is known in Urartian sources as 'The Land of the Waza(eans)' (^{m}*'azaini* KUR-*ni*).[6] Urartians appeared here by the end of the 9th century BC, most probably at the time of Minua. It is known that Minua built a large city in the vicinity of Mt Ararat and named it Minuahinili, after himself.[7] It is traditionally located not far from Tsolakert (Taşburun), near the present village of Aşağı Karakoyunlu,[8] though it is not excluded that this city was located in the territory of Artashat, where remains of a large Urartian fortress were excavated.[9] In nearly the same period almost all large Early Iron Age settlements

[6] Diakonoff and Kashkai 1981, 99; N. Harutyunyan 1985, 13.
[7] *KUKN* 48, 87; *CTU* I, A 5-26, A 5-27.
[8] Martirosyan 1964, 232–33; Marro and Özfırat 2005, 332–33; 2010, 528; 2012, 127.
[9] Khachatryan 1987, 162; Igumnov *et al*. 1997, 200, n. 31.

of the Ararat valley were destroyed by Urartian invaders: Dvin, Shamiram and Elar (which were not reconstructed in the Urartian period and contain only pre-Urartian layers), and Metsamor and Voskevaz (which were later reconstructed by Urartians).[10]

The Ararat valley was the most extensive agricultural zone of the Urartian empire with 200,000 ha of fertile soils and was of an extreme importance. The birth of Urartu as a typical ancient Near Eastern state based on agriculture created a demand to transform the landscape, especially in the dry but fertile soils of the plain and valley regions. In these circumstances, the statement of the Urartian inscriptions about the deserted territories[11] as well as lack of irrigation canals, fields, grape orchards and fruit-bearing trees[12] would be not far from reality.

The reclamation of the Ararat valley started along with the first invasions. Two large centres, Erebuni and Argishtihinili, were established here by Argishti son of Minua (the first half of the 8th century BC). His royal inscriptions also inform us about canal construction in the Ararat valley.[13] Five large canals may be observed archaeologically, the overall length of which is nearly 50 km.[14] Construction took place in the region of the lower course of the Hrazdan in connection with the establishment of Erebuni, and was aimed at irrigating the soils of the city and its environs.[15]

The first planned resettlements were carried out by the Urartians in these territories at the time of Minua. The inscription of Tsolakert/Taşburun left by this king talks of 'populating' the vicinity of Minuahinili: 'When Minua (invaded) the land of Erkuahi, the city of Luhiuni, at that time Minua populated this place [literally "made it inhabited"]'.[16] It is known that 6600 warriors from the lands of Hate and Supa were resettled with their families in Ararat valley by the successor of Minua Argishti I.[17]

During the same period, in the beginning of the 8th century BC, a small fortress or fortified road station was established near the above-mentioned Early Iron Age settlement located near the gorge edge, which was part of the fortified system of Erebuni controlling the pathway from Erebuni to Metsamor and Argishtihinili. The activities of successive Urartian kings avoided this zone as they were mainly conducting the reconstructions of Erebuni and Argishtihinili.

[10] Avetisyan and Avetisyan 2006, 6.
[11] *KUKN* 187_4, 417_2, 419_4, 421_7; *CTU* I, A 8-15_4. A 12-7_4. 12-8_7; A 12-10_2, etc.
[12] For example, *KUKN* $407_{28\text{-}31}$; *CTU* I, A 11-1 $Ro_{27\text{-}30}$, etc.
[13] *KUKN* 187–188; *CTU* I, A 8-15-16.
[14] Martirosyan 1974, 24 and figs. 7, 37.
[15] Agakhanyan and Martirosyan 1984, 194.
[16] N. Harutyunyan 2002. See also *KUK*N 48; *CTU* I, A 5-27.
[17] *KUKN* 173 $II_{36\text{-}37}$, 174 $A2_{21\text{-}22}$; *CTU* I, A 8-3 $II_{36\text{-}37}$, A 8-1 $Vo_{21\text{-}22}$.

KARMIR-BLUR – THE 'CITY OF TEISHEBA'

The years of reign of Rusa son of Argishti, generally known as Rusa II (the first half of the 7th century BC[18]) are considered as a period of revival or transformation of the Urartian kingdom.[19] As is known, rapid urban construction prospered during the reign of this king. According to sources, at least four large administrative centres were established by him: 'The City of Teisheba' (Karmir-Blur), 'Rusa's Small City' (Bastam), 'The City of Haldi of the Land of Ziuquni' (Adılcevaz Kef Kalesi), 'Rusahinili Eidurukai' (Ayanis),[20] and with little probability, 'Rusahinili Qilbanikai' (Toprakkale).[21] Besides that, splendid new temples were built and new canals were constructed. As generally believed, stability and peace were established in the country between various ethnic groups, due to which the antagonism between the so-called Biainili and local cultures disappeared.[22] At the same time new military campaigns were carried out in various directions.[23]

Karmir-Blur was probably the first city founded by Rusa. Taking into account that the city of Ayanis was built around the 670s BC[24] and that it was the last large city-building project of Rusa, the foundation of Karmir-Blur can be dated to the 680s BC.[25]

The first city of Rusa was named after Teisheba, the storm god in the Urartian pantheon (^{d}*teišebaini*/^{d}IM-*ni* URU, ^{m}*'azaini* KUR-*ni* ^{d}IM-*ni* URU).[26]

THE CITADEL

The citadel, occupying an area of about 4 ha, rose above the city. It consisted of a giant horseshoe-shaped building (Fig. 4), the ends of which were connected with a huge fortification wall and formed an inner courtyard facing the city.[27] The architecture of the citadel was successfully linked to the physical environment by the Urartian builders. The outer, north-eastern edge of the fortress had a truncated outline due to the angular, mainly straight passages

[18] Here, we do not touch upon the issue of the succession of these kings. For discussion, see and compare Seidl 2007, 137; Salvini 2007, 146; Roaf 2010, 66.
[19] Burney 1977, 3; Hmayakyan 1995, 105; Smith 1999, 57; Zimansky 2001, 22; 2012, 104.
[20] Çilingiroğlu and Salvini 2001, 15.
[21] Grekyan 2017b (with literature).
[22] Hmayakyan 1995, 105.
[23] *CTU* I, A 12-1 VI_{10-11}.
[24] Manning *et al*. 2001, 2534; Newton and Kuniholm 2007, 195.
[25] Çilingiroğlu and Salvini 2001, 23.
[26] *KUKN* 422, 424_2; *CTU* I, A 12-2 I_2; *CTU* IV, B 12-15, CB Ay-4_1.
[27] Hovhannisyan 1955, 36, figs. 1, 13; Martirosyan 1964, 251, fig. 94.

typical of Urartian architecture. Such interconnection between landscape and planning solutions is typical of fortress-construction in the Armenian highlands beginning from Early Iron Age.

It is noteworthy that in preliminary plan the fortress was smaller and afterwards it was extended several times in a south-westerly direction. As a result the previous fortress walls and buttresses were left inside rooms, forming peculiar projections.[28]

The fortress wall surrounding the façade and the yard of the main building was strengthened by buttresses, which were placed at an equal distance from each other. Massive rectangular towers were built at the corners. The main building had no entrance from the yard side, and only a ramp led to the upper floor. The citadel was linked to the outer world by means of gates opened in the opposite sides of the outer fortress wall surrounding the citadel. The main gate was the southern one; the small gate was in the north-west. This small

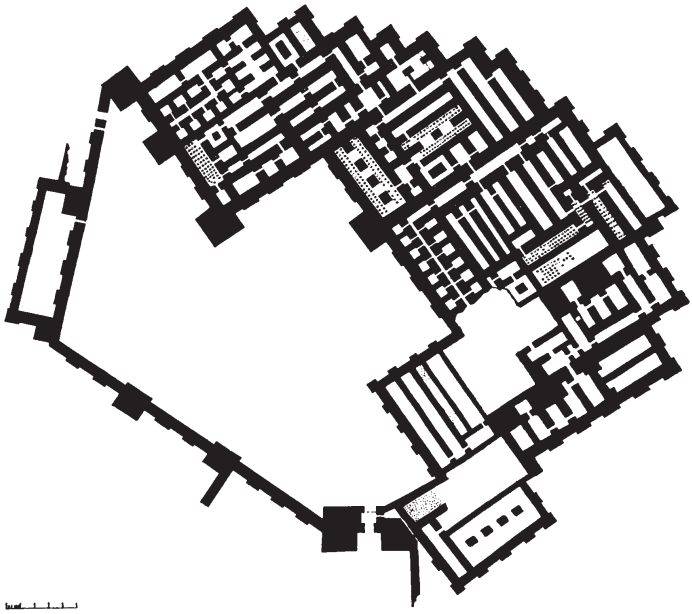

Fig. 4. Karmir-Blur, plan of the Urartian citadel (after Piotrovsky 1962, fig. 5).

[28] Piotrovsky 1950, 45; Hovhannisyan 1955, 37; Yesayan 1982, 14.

gate was sufficiently broad for chariots to pass through it. There was also a door for pedestrians (Fig. 5). The main southern gate, which faces another Urartian centre, the city of Erebuni, was placed between two massive towers (Fig. 6). Some time later this gate was blocked with stones and ceased to function. This is an interesting phenomenon that is followed also in other Urartian fortresses of the 7th century BC.[29]

The basement of the outer wall and inner sections of the citadel was built of stone with mud-brick on top. Rectangular bricks measuring 51.8 (i.e. an Urartian cubit)[30] × 35.0 × 14.9 and 51.8 × 51.8 × 14.9 cm were used.[31] Thus, the outer wall of the citadel was 7 cubits thick or had the thickness of ten brick rows (about 3.5 m). The inner walls of the fortress buildings were 4 cubits thick or had the thickness of six brick rows (around 2.1 m). The outer walls were 10 m high; the height of the highest preserved wall is 7 m. The walls were plastered with clay mortar, which was sometimes mixed with the straw; the brick masonry was duplicated by the means of incised lines on it. It is supposed that two million mud bricks were needed in the construction of the fortress.[32]

The middle part and the eastern side of the citadel building had two floors, the other parts could have had various light constructions on the lower floor. A small part of the upper floor was preserved. Seemingly, it was built later, as some rooms beneath the upper storey were filled with stones and soil and served as a basement. The ceremonial halls, rooms and the cultic structures were placed on the upper floor. It is possible that the *susi* temple of Karmir-Blur was situated here,[33] as the basalt stones of the face part carrying an inscription of Rusa son of Argishti were preserved here.[34]

The ground floor of the citadel consisted of the long halls, which were connected with each other by entrances and corridors, and adjacent small rectangular and square rooms (Fig. 7). The rooms had different levels and were interconnected by the means of brick stairs or ramps. In some cases the room entrances were from above, and rooms could be entered by descending wooden stairs.

[29] Burney 1966, 66, pl. III/b; Belli 1996, 386, Figs. 6–9; 2001, 167, fig. 6; Çilingiroğlu and Işıklı 2014, 311.
[30] Diakonoff 1951, 116; Sivkov 1944, 83.
[31] Hovhannisyan 1955, 79.
[32] Piotrovsky 1959b, 170.
[33] For a reconstruction, see and compare Dan 2010, 44, figs. 1–6.
[34] *KUKN* 424–427; *CTU* I, A 12-2 I-III, VIII.

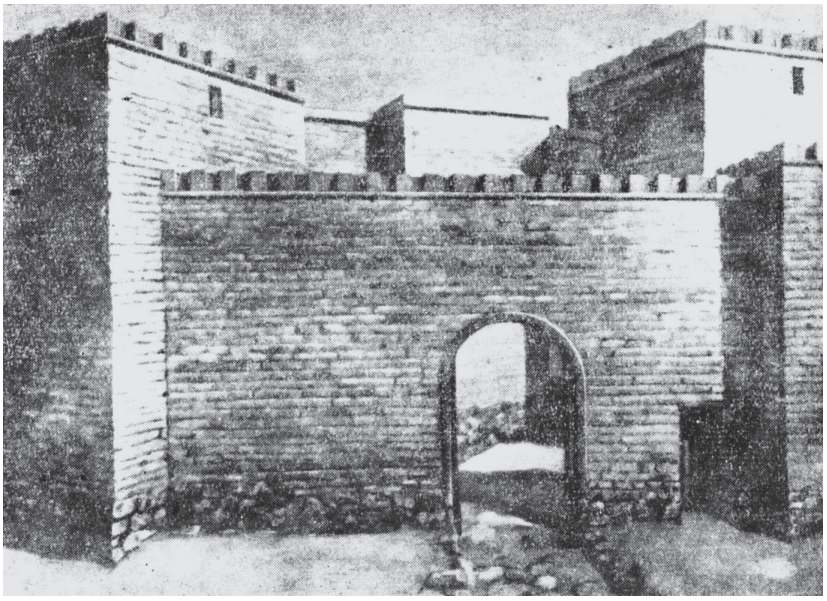

Fig. 5. Karmir-Blur, reconstruction of the north-western gate of the citadel (after Hovhannisyan 1955, fig. 41).

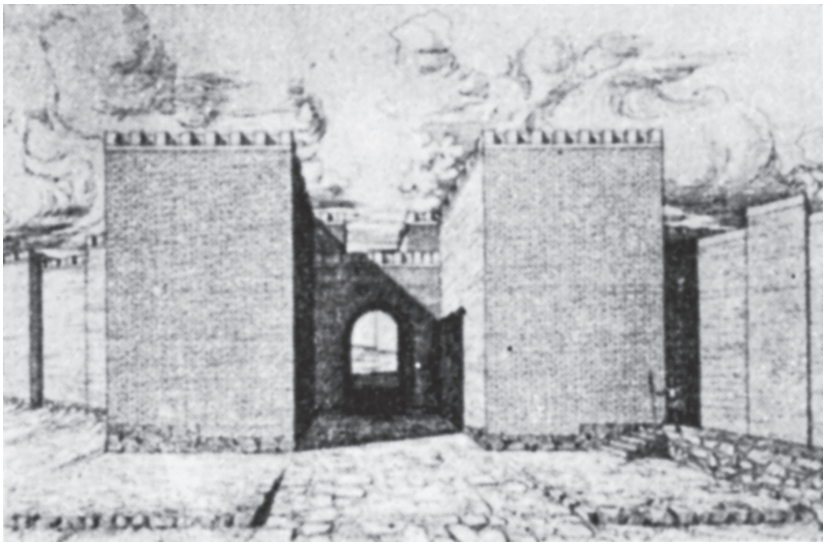

Fig. 6. Karmir-Blur, reconstruction of the southern gate of the citadel (after Hovhannisyan 1955, fig. 40).

The exterior of the citadel building rose towards the top of the hill, the ceilings of the buildings of one section serving as a yard for the buildings above. In such cases the problem of illumination of the upper rooms was solved, as it was similarly in other Urartian sites.[35] The light in the room passed through the windows just below the ceiling (Fig. 8), and other adjacent rooms placed on the same level were illuminated by the means of openings or were deprived of outer light. Numerous lamps found from the rooms of Karmir-Blur could be evidence of the latter.[36]

In general, the ground floor of the citadel had around 150 rooms. These were mainly granaries, storehouses, cellars, stockrooms and industrial rooms. The cellars were the largest, the greatest of which (hall no. 25) occupied 320 m^2 and housed 82 pithoi (Fig. 9); no. 28 housed 72 pithoi, and another 180 large pithoi were placed in the remaining five cellars. Generally, the seven cellars excavated in Karmir-Blur contained more than 400 pithoi (Figs. 10–11).[37]

State workshops processing agricultural products were concentrated in the large Urartian centres. One for processing sesame oil was excavated in Karmir-Blur.[38] Here, in another workshop beer was processed.[39] A cheese-making workshop was also unearthed.[40]

As the clothing of the numerous warriors and other workers was provided by the state in Urartu, considerable number of sewing workshops definitely existed. Among the palace/temple members in Toprakkale 66 female weavers were mentioned (^{SAL}GAD-*ḫi-e*).[41] Another weaver, a certain Gulili, is mentioned in one of the cuneiform tablets found in the Upper Anzaf Fortress (^{m}*guliliedi* ^{LÚ}GAD).[42] It is interesting that in a clay tablet found at Karmir-Blur, goods imported to the provincial centre named 'The City of Teisheba of the land of Waza'[43] are mentioned (Fig. 12). There are various items of clothing and leathers, including 12 woollen clothes (12 TÚG UDU), another 25 woollen clothes (25 TÚG UDU), 198 leathers/clothes (?), 26 ox hides (26 KUŠ GUD), 162 sheepskins (1 ME 50 10 2 KUŠ *šú-še*) and 16 or 18 goatskins 16/18 KUŠ UZ), as well as 14 sheep or sheepskins (14 UDU).[44]

[35] For example, Çilingiroğlu 2011, 356.
[36] Piotrovsky 1955, tab. VIII.
[37] Piotrovskiy 1952, 16; 1962, 40–41; Yesayan 1982, 15.
[38] Piotrovsky 1959a, 137; Ghasabyan 1957, 107, fig. 1.
[39] Piotrovsky 1959a, 147; Ghasabyan 1959, 78.
[40] Piotrovsky 1959a, 150; Yesayan 1982, 22.
[41] *CTU* IV, CT Tk-1 Ro_{13}.
[42] *CTU* IV, CB An-1_1.
[43] *CTU* IV, CT-Kb 10_7. *Cf.* KUKN 521, n. 1.
[44] *KUKN* 521; *CTU* IV, CT Kb-10.

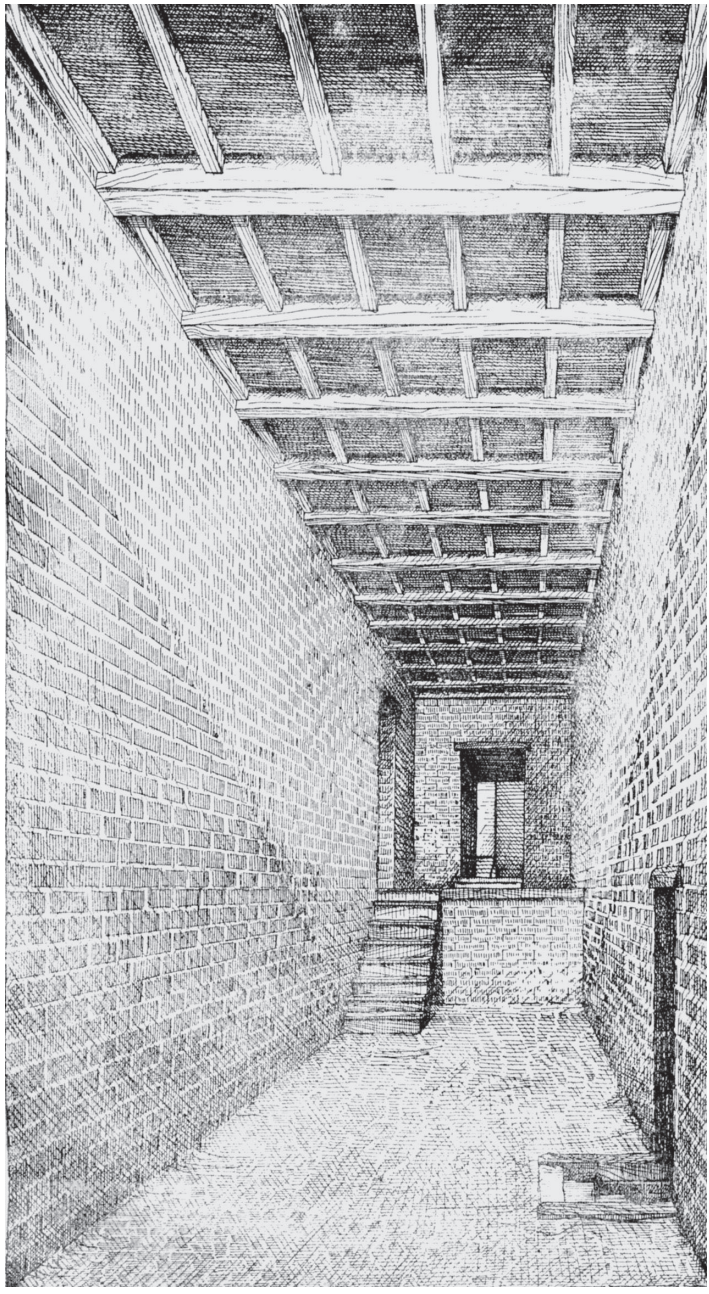

Fig. 7. The northern corridor on the ground floor, reconstruction (after Hovhannisyan 1955, fig. 22).

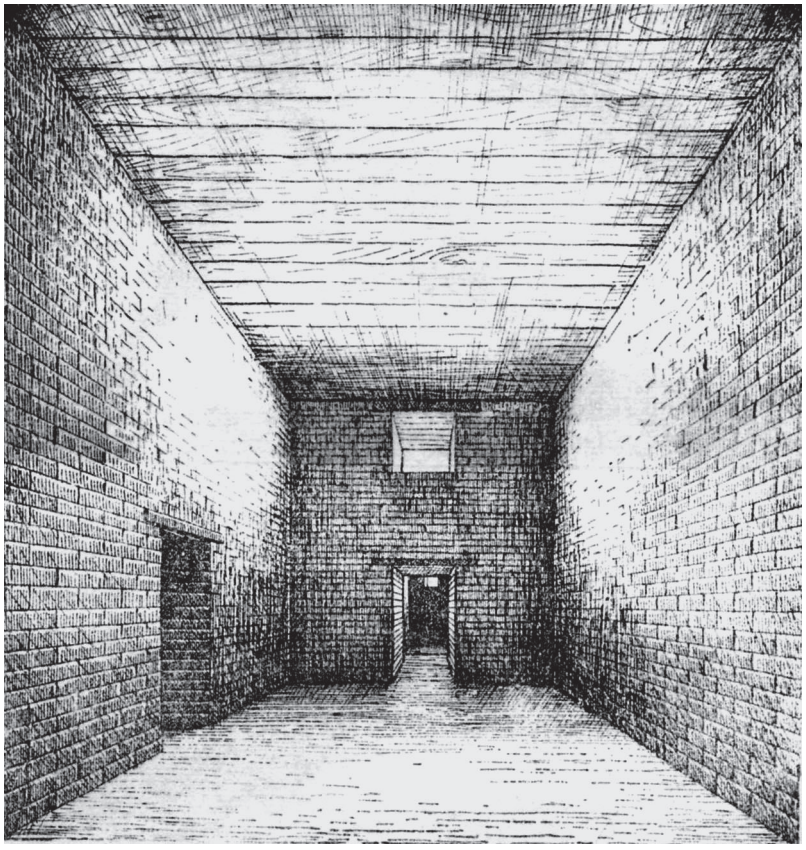

Fig. 8. A reconstruction of the openings below the ceilings to illuminate the upper rooms on the ground floor (after Hovhannisyan 1955, fig. 19).

The leather could have been intended for shields, quivers, shoes and armour-making. Different textile fragments as well as fragmented military cloth were found at Karmir-Blur.[45] The dye, which is called in Armenian mediaeval sources *vordan karmir* and was processed in the Ararat valley from Armenian cochineal (*porphyrophora hamelii Brandt*), which can be seen on the banks of the Araxes river, was famous in Urartu during this period. The textile *tabarru*[46] – which is mentioned in Assyrian sources as a product of Urartu and the land of Habhi – could have been made of the wool dyed by the *vordan karmir* pigment.[47]

[45] Verxovskaya 1955, 67, fig. 48, tab. XVI.
[46] Mayer 1983, 104–05, z. 366.
[47] Jankowska 1969, 258–59. *Cf. Chicago Assyrian Dictionary* vol. 18, 21.

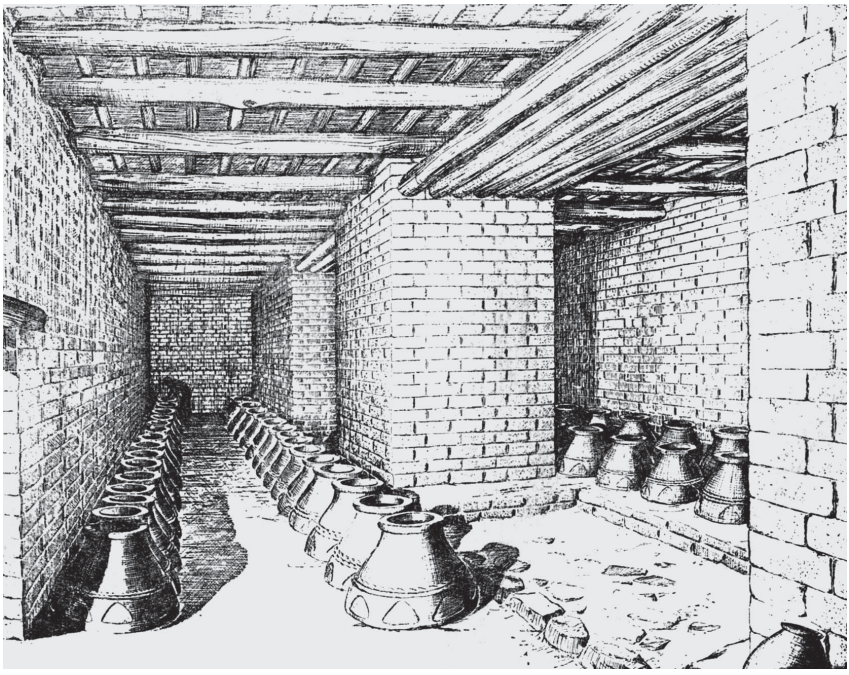

Fig. 9. One of the largest cellars (hall no. 28) of the citadel with 72 pithoi, reconstruction (after Hovhannisyan 1955, fig. 28).

There were many state potters' workshops in Urartu. Ceramics were wheel-made, such as those excavated in Karmir-Blur,[48] Erebuni[49] and Argishtihinili.[50] The products of these workshops were signed with the potter's mark and kept for further use.[51] Some 1036 pitchers and 70 vessels of various functions were found in one of the storehouses of Karmir-Blur (Fig. 13).[52]

Numerous iron and bronze poles found from Karmir-Blur were used as raw material and form evidence of the existence of shops for smelting and working metal.[53] The golden bar found at Karmir-Blur was used for the same purpose.[54]

[48] Piotrovsky 1952, 86, fig. 46.
[49] Israyelyan 1971, 80, tab. XV.
[50] Martirosyan 1974, 115.
[51] Piotrovsky 1959a, 147; Martirosyan 1981, 80, figs. 60, 64–66; Khodyash 1981, 85, figs. 67–70, 73–74; Çilingiroğlu and Salvini 2012, 100.
[52] Piotrovsky 1959a, 145; 1970, fig. 15.
[53] Piotrovsky 1959b, 175; Yesayan 1982, 30.
[54] Piotrovsky 1955, 18; Hmayakyan 2007, 162, tab. XCVII/6.

Fig. 10. The very cellar 'hall no. 28' after excavations (after Piotrovsky 1970, fig. 11).

One of the largest Urartian copper cauldrons was found in Karmir-Blur (capacity 600 litres).[55]

The large number of palace utensils as well as votives and battle weapons include 20 bronze shields, 21 helmets, 18 bronze quivers and numerous arrowheads.[56] The votive objects usually carry short dedicatory inscriptions (Fig. 14).[57]

[55] Piotrovsky 1959a, 170; Martirosyan 1961, 92.
[56] Piotrovsky 1955, 24; Yesayan 1982, 46–49.
[57] Piotrovsky 1970, figs. 38–41, 44–50, 54–55; Yesayan 1982, 46.

Fig. 11. Another cellar (hall no. 40) at the citadel with 20 pithoi after excavations (after Piotrovsky 1970, fig. 9).

Fig. 12. Clay tablet, from the preserved part of the cuneiform archive of Karmir-Blur (after Piotrovsky 1970, fig. 15).

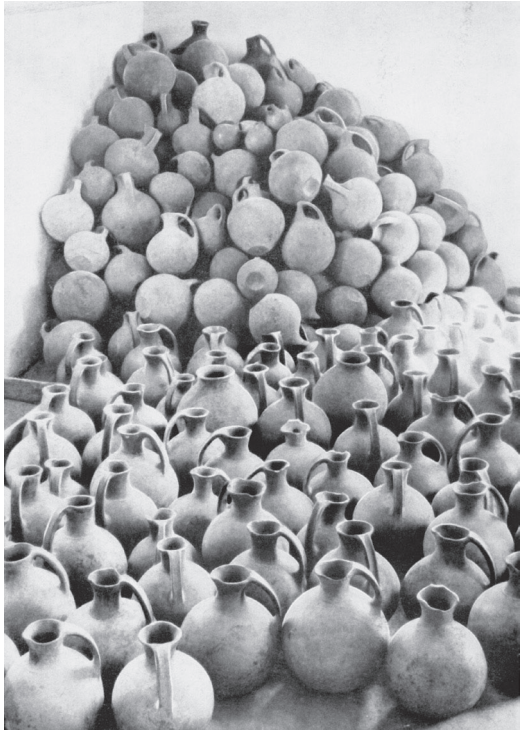

Fig. 13. The products of a potter's workshop at the citadel (after Piotrovsky 1970, fig. 15).

Fig. 14. Urartian bronze decorated shield, Karmir-Blur (after J. Santrot, *Arménie. Trésors de l'Arménie ancienne* [Paris/Nantes 1996], 134, fig. 109).

'The Outer City'

Karmir-Blur is surrounded on three sides by the Hrazdan river, which has a deep channel and is difficult of access. There are no natural barriers from the Ararat valley side and the city was protected by walls. These walls were around 3 m thick, built of mud-brick masonry on stone foundations, and were strengthened by buttresses. Two large parts of the walls were discovered; the first was excavated in 1948 and was 500 m long. It began in the south-

eastern corner of the citadel and outlined the eastern side of the city. Then, turning to the south-west, the wall formed a straight angle and finished with the ruins of a large tower. The excavated part of the other wall is 200 m long. It starts from the north-western entrance of the citadel and stretches to the south-west (Fig. 15).

The construction project for the city was probably unfinished, as no walls have been found in places where their presence was expected (to surround the city in defenceless parts).[58]

The citadel was interconnected with the 'outer city' by two roads. One of these begins from the main southern gate of the fortress and, apparently, connected the city with Erebuni. The second road is most probably located in the south-west of the city and connected the city with the right bank of the Hrazdan, crossing a bridge. The remains of the bridge, represented by masonry of worked basalt stones, were found on both banks of the river. The built up territory of the city, including the citadel, covered an area of up to 40 ha.[59]

The inhabited quarters of Karmir-Blur are located in front of the fortress. The 'main street' of the city starts from the main gate of the fortress. It is 5.57 m wide and stretches in an east–west direction for 200 m. The second road of the city stretched in parallel with the first, and they were connected with each other by a third street (length 9.46 m). Two/three-room dwellings with open yards were discovered at opposite sides of the main street, facing each other. The walls were 0.7–0.8 m thick and up to 3.5 m high. All buildings of the city quarter had flat roofs that rested on the walls or on one or two poles and were illuminated through openings. The house entrance was never opened from the side of the main street and someone walking down the highway could only see blind walls on both sides.

A mansion excavated at the crossroads of two streets was named 'Megaron of Karmir-Blur' because of its planning. It differs from the other constructions of the quarter with its wide and luxurious balcony looking towards the street. The house had an entrance hall, a hall, two large columned rooms and household constructions (Figs. 16–17).[60]

The south-western side of the city was distinguished by free-standing houses of up to ten rooms with an area of 400–600 m^2. These are provisionally called the houses of the Urartian elite, particularly because all of them were built according to an Urartian state standard and with typical Urartian architectural monumentality, including buttressed walls and corner towers. One of this kind

[58] Hovhannisyan 1955, 11.
[59] Piotrovsky 1959b, 170; Martirosyan 1961, 106; 1964, 259.
[60] Hovhannisyan 1964, 28; 1978, 19.

Fig. 15. Karmir-Blur, general plan of the site, including the 'Outer City' (after Martirosyan 1961, fig. 94).

of house occupied an area of 500 m^2. It had five rectangular rooms, one large, columned hall and a yard, with a 3 m-wide entrance for chariots and carts.[61]

It is apparent that the houses built by the state were inhabited by members of the ruling class, both officials of high rank and soldiers – representatives of a class described in Urartian sources by the term ^{LÚ}*mari-ni*/*ye* ('noble', 'charioteer').[62] That they were members of the ruling class could be evidenced by the scaly armour of soldiers or charioteers found in the citadel and houses.

[61] Hovhannisyan 1955, 18.

[62] For example, *KUKN* 412, Ro$_9$; *CTU* IV, CT Tk-1 Ro$_9$. *Cf*. Hurrian *mariyanni* ('charioteer') (Wilhelm 1995, 1247).

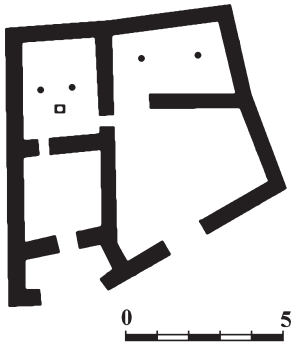

Fig. 16. Plan of an elite house, the so-called 'Megaron of Karmir-Blur' (after Hovhannisyan 1964, 29, fig. 1a).

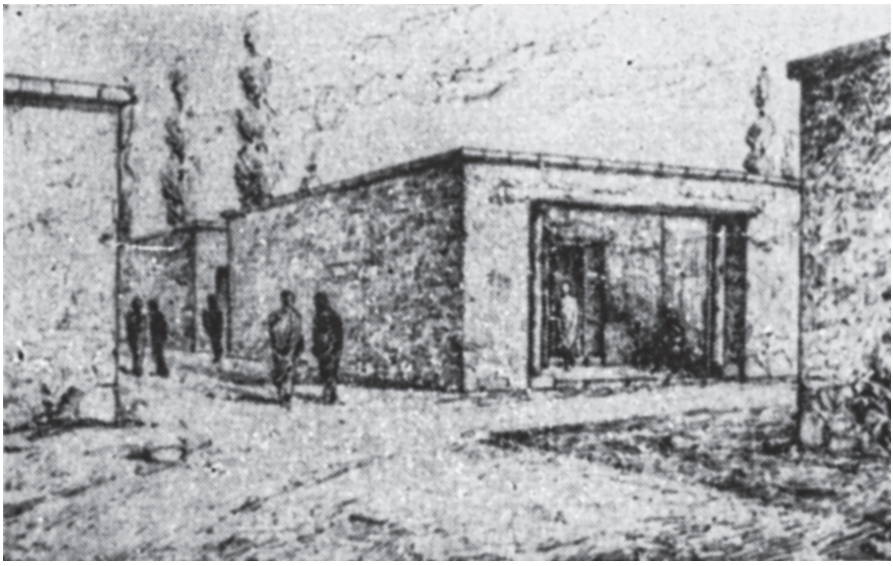

Fig. 17. 'Megaron of Karmir-Blur', reconstruction (after Hovhannisyan 1964, 29, fig. 1).

The study of horse remains in one of the houses proved that the remains had been set in a chariot.[63]

[63] Piotrovsky 1955, 9, 30, figs. 2, 21, 23–25, tab. XIV. For an Argishtihinili example, see Martirosyan 1974, 112, fig. 89b (10).

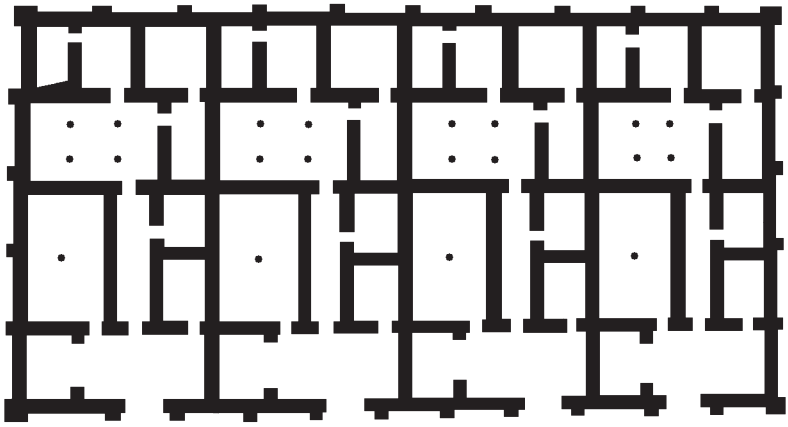

Fig. 18. Plan of the 'state standard' multi-sectional building of Karmir-Blur (after Martirosyan 1961, figs. 98–99).

A vivid example of architecture to the Urartian 'state standard' is a multi-sectional building excavated in the south-western side of the outer city of Karmir-Blur. It occupied an area of *ca*. 2200 m^2 (62 × 33 m), has a regular rectangular plan, decorated with buttresses and corner towers, and consists of four dwellings to the same plan, eleven sections each, with separate balconies (Fig. 18).[64] No monumental cultic structures were found in the city's territory.[65]

Temple/Palace Household of Karmir-Blur

The fortress of Karmir-Blur was considered as the new economic centre of the Ararat valley for a long time on account of the giant cellars and storehouses found there. As mentioned above, more than 400 pithoi with a capacity of 400,000 litres were found before the end of the excavations in the cellars opened in the fortress.[66]

The capacity of the ten granaries excavated in the southern part of the fortress is 80–100 m^3 and these could house 750 tons of cereals. The total quantity of cereals kept in Karmir-Blur was probably around 1500 tons. The amount

[64] Martirosyan 1964, 260, figs. 98–99.
[65] For details, see Grekyan 2017a.
[66] Piotrovsky 1959b, 172; 1962, 40.

of cereals found from only two storehouses during the excavations of the citadel reaches 20,000 litres.[67]

The harvest yield from 1 ha of land in the Ararat valley during the Urartian period was 500–1000 kg.[68] This assumption is consistent with the data from northern Mesopotamia.[69] Thus, to fill the storage in Karmir-Blur, 2000–3000 ha of land was needed. If we consider reliable the supposition that Karmir-Blur had an opportunity to get 1500 tons of grapes to fill the wine supply as well as for food usage, then, for such a harvest, 300–350 ha of grape orchards were necessary.[70] If we add the orchards and territories under cultivation of plants used for non-alimentary purposes, it becomes apparent that to fill the storage of Karmir-Blur 4000–5000 ha of plough-land was needed,[71] and at least 280–330 pairs of draught animals for cultivation of that land.[72] Another 500–650 ha of sowing was needed to supply food for those animals. The amount of dry territories and soils which were left as tillage must be added to these numbers. Around 2000–2300 workers were needed to cultivate only this territory.[73]

As there were no areas set aside for the preservation of agricultural produce or to house domestic animals in some of the houses of the outer city, it is most likely that the civil and military inhabitants did not manage a household and were supported by the state.[74] It is noteworthy that if the supplies of Karmir-Blur were used only as food for the people, then there would be enough for 2400 families, or around 9000–10000 people per year.

The Fall of Karmir-Blur

During the reign of Rusa son of Argishti, or in the period close to his reign, we witness a process which ruptured completely the natural vital activity of the empire from the inside and then brought the system to total collapse. In particular, a dramatic growth of instability was traced in Urartu. Rapid protective activities were undertaken: city walls were strengthened and the outer cities near fortresses were surrounded by walls; gates were narrowed or only one entrance was left; and a growth in garrison numbers and weapon-making is

[67] Piotrovsky 1950, 53; Yesayan 1982, 29.
[68] Yesayan 1982, 19.
[69] For example, Zaccagnini 1975, 182; Wiggermann 2000, 193.
[70] See Wartke 1993, 87.
[71] Yesayan 1982, 19.
[72] For example, Wiggermann 2000, 189.
[73] For example, Wilkinson 1994, 496.
[74] Piotrovsky 1952, 10.

noticed. Extra stocks of produce were collected in the fortresses and the forced movement to the fortresses of the population with domestic animals and property occurred. This phenomenon is noticed in almost all large Urartian centres; it is followed by the collapse of these centres.[75]

This crisis in Urartu was first recorded in Karmir-Blur. Here, some time after the construction of the citadel, the walling of the outer city wall started, which was apparently left unfinished.[76] The city population grew during the last stage of existence of the fortress with the influx of the population from neighbouring settlements and fortresses to the 'city of Teisheba', for whom temporary dwellings were built both in the 'Urartian elite quarter' and in the citadel itself, in free spaces of the inner yard and near the fortress walls.[77] These dwellings were small and hastily built, with walls of either of single courses of stone or of clay. The ceiling was of light construction, in one case resting on the beams which played the role of columns, and covered by the sand, filled with tree branches and reed. The population brought domestic animals, the entire skeletons of which were found in rooms of the citadel that these were not used as enclosures.[78]

The fall of Karmir-Blur occurred in summer, between July and August, at the time when the grapes had not ripened. The remains of green grapes were found during excavation, as well as remains of the flowers of cornflower (*Ccntaurea cyanus*) and oats (*avena*), which blossom in Ararat valley during this period.

The city was attacked during the night, from the north-western side of the citadel. Here, numerous 'Scythian-type' arrowheads were found in the masonry of stone basements of walls and in collapsed brick walls. Most of people had no time to take their weapons because of the sudden attack. These were left near the ovens of the temporary houses. The women escaped, leaving their golden adornments in the dwellings.

The ceilings of the temporary dwellings collapsed during the attack. The mud-brick walls of the fortress also collapsed onto these buildings. This circumstance explains the abundance of archaeological material in such dwellings. The skeletons of people who perished during the attack were also found there.

The people who found shelter within the citadel kept their precious items in the empty pithoi of the cellars. More than 97 bronze bowls with cuneiform inscriptions of the Urartian kings of the 8th century BC were found in one of

[75] Grekyan 2009, 103, 109 (with literature).

[76] Sorokin 1952, 79; Hovhannisyan 1955, 11–12, fig. 1. For the last period of existence of Karmir-Blur, see and compare Hmayakyan 1998, 10.

[77] Piotrovsky 1950, 21; Martirosyan 1961, 126, 134.

[78] Martirosyan 1961, 128.

these containers (Fig. 19).[79] Votive bronze shields, helmets and quivers were found in another wine cellar. This cellar was not robbed, as huge basalt stones of pillars constructed in the upper floors collapsed into it through the roof which was wrecked during the fire (Fig. 20).

The fire which flared up in the fortress during the attack destroyed everything. The people who had no time to escape as well as domestic animals were buried under the ruins. Some of these animals were on the roofs of the storage constructions of the citadel and fell down from the height after the collapse of the burnt roof. In the sections of the eastern part of the citadel burnt the corpses of 14 individuals were found.[80] The fire was so strong that the mud-brick walls of the fortress turned bright red. This was why this wonderful Urartian site remained in history as Karmir-Blur (in Armenian 'Red Hill').

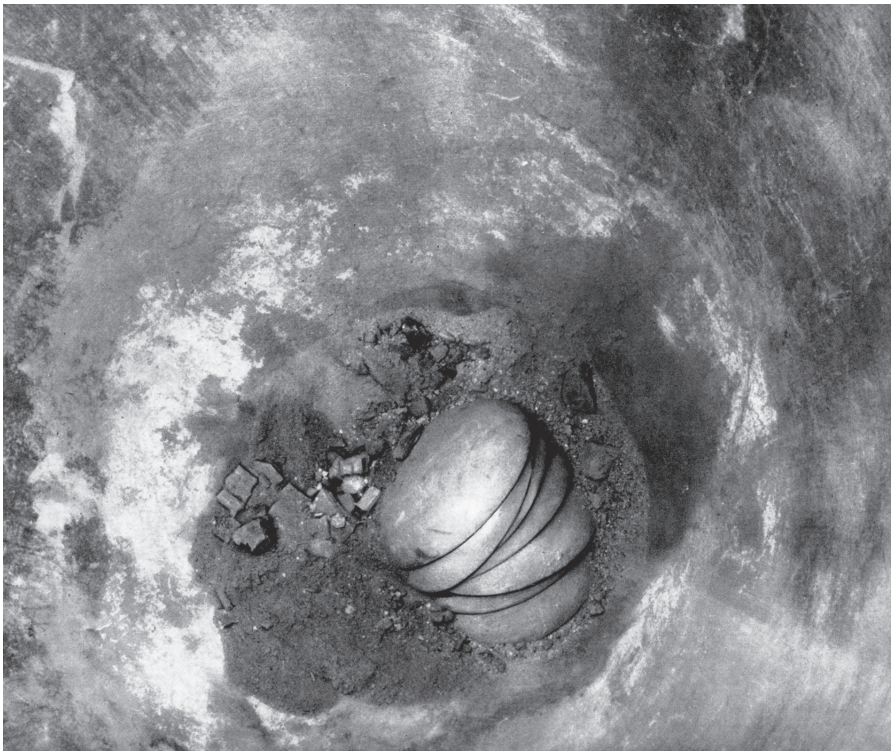

Fig. 19. Urartian inscribed bronze bowls found in a large pithos (after Piotrovsky 1970, fig. 62).

[79] Piotrovsky 1952, 20.
[80] Piotrovsky 1950, 32; 1959b, 185; N. Harutyunyan 1964, 184.

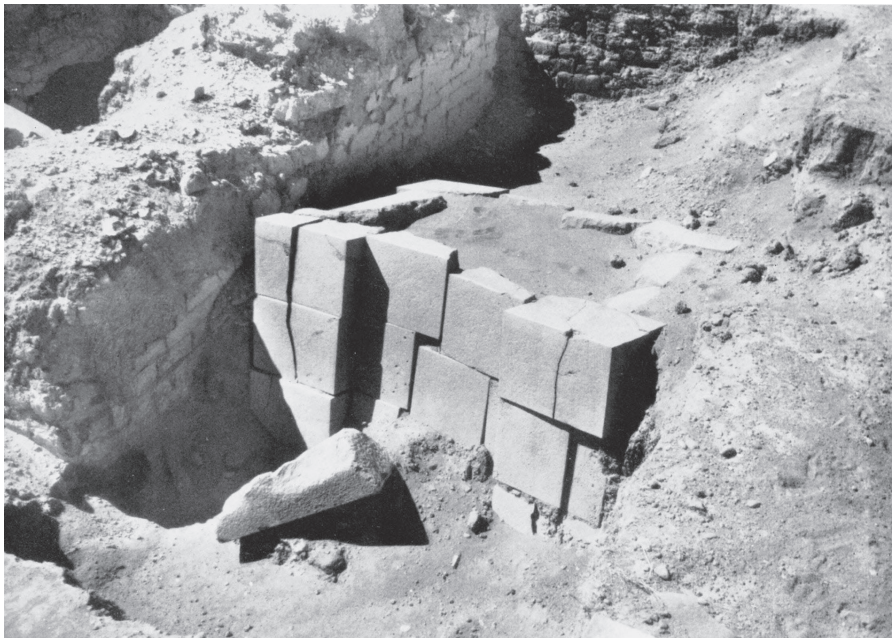

Fig. 20. Basalt stones of a pillar collapsed into a room of a ground floor from the 'pillared hall' of the upper floor (after Piotrovsky 1970, fig. 7).

Karmir-Blur in the Post-Urartian Period

Sometime in the 7th–6th centuries BC the city was abandoned. Part of the territory of the city was used as a necropolis beginning from the middle of the 5th century BC:[81] the burials are in stone boxes; the burial chambers are oval, and sometimes the stones of Urartian structures were used for their construction. A silver coin of Alexander the Great (336–323 BC) was found in one burial. A coin of the Sasanid Shapur II (AD 309–379) was also discovered here, which suggests that the necropolis existed until the 4th century AD.

The territory of Karmi-Blur was again populated in the early mediaeval period. According to Armenian mediaeval sources, it was a territory with an estate that belonged to the Catholicos. Later it was mentioned as a settlement. The Seljuk coins found here date to the 11th–12th centuries. Among them are coins with the names of Muḥammad bin Dā'ūd Çaḡrī Beg (Sultan Alp Arslan, 1063–1072), Sultan Sanjar Aḥmad bin Malekshāh (1118–1157), Shams-al-dīn

[81] Martirosyan 196, 137.

Īldegoz (1137–1175) and Sultan Mozaffar-al-dīn Qezel Arslān ʻOṭmān (1186–1191).[82] The walls of the 10th–14th-century chapel still existed at the beginning of excavation of the site. It is noteworthy that all stones with cuneiform inscriptions were found in the mediaeval layer of Karmir-Blur. One of the last records about this territory refers to the early 18th century. According to it, Melik Sahak Yerevantsi, one of the richest people in Yerevan, gave the territory of Karmir-Blur to the Armenian Catholicate of Etchmiadzin during the reign of Catholicos Astvatsatur (1715–1725).

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THE CAPITAL CITY TUSHPA/VAN CITADEL*

M. Taner TARHAN

Abstract

This detailed and comprehensive chapter describes the history and remains of Tushpa/Van Citadel (Van Kalesi), the ancient capital of Urartu near modern Van. It considers the accounts of early and late 19th-century travellers, the subsequent history of scholarly involvement with and excavation of (different parts of) the site (in various phases, particularly since 1959), then its location and local geography, before examining, one by one, the monumental buildings, royal tombs, other graves, Achaemenid tombs, notable results (and finds), an inscription of Xerxes I, the 'Lower City' and mound, etc.

Tushpa, the capital city of the Urartian kingdom, is located on the shores of Lake Van, approximately 5 km west of the centre of the modern city of Van (Fig. 1). It is also known as Van Citadel (Van Kalesi). The foundation of Tushpa as a capital city is a long story of the struggle against the sworn enemy, Assyria, and the harsh environmental conditions. The Urartian kingdom was founded in the 9th century BC by Sarduri I (*ca.* 840–830 BC), one of the founder-kings, who established the kingdom system following the Ur(u)atri and Nairi Confederations of the 13th–9th centuries BC.[1] (This period between 13th and 9th centuries BC is known as 'The Archaic Ages of Urartu'.[2]) In light of the archaeological data collected from the excavations we conducted between 1987 and 1991, the stratigraphic facts concerning Tushpa can be summarised as follows: judging from the stratigraphy and finds from the mound on the northern slopes of the citadel, there is an uninterrupted settlement history in Tushpa starting from the Early Bronze Age and continuing until the First World War. Remarkable, ordinary or faint, the traces of this long historical process are the undeniable pieces of evidence that documents the characteristics of successive periods from various aspects.

* It is a pleasure for me to thank S. Merve Batıkan and Baha Batıkan for their technical assistance in the preparation of my chapter.

[1] Salvini 1967, 32; 2006, 28–47; Tarhan 1980, 70, 99–109; 1983, 295.

[2] Tarhan 1980, 295.

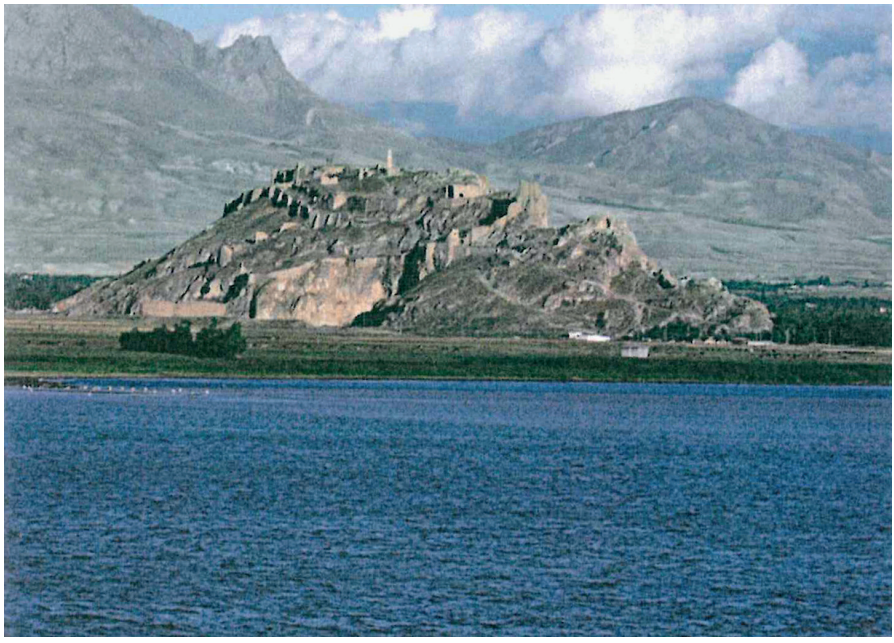

Fig. 1. Van Citadel from the Lake Van, north-western view (author's archive).

From the 9th century BC onwards, the capital appears as Turushpa in the Assyrian sources and Tushpa in the Urartian texts.[3] It is also suggested that the name Tushpa is closely linked with the Urartian goddess Tushpuea. In ancient sources, it is named as Thospia, while the mediaeval texts use Tosp/Dosp, all of which were derived from the name Tushpa.[4]

The name Van is related to the term Biane/Biainili, which the Urartians used to designate their own being.[5] These names, together with others such as Iban and Buana, were derived from Biane and transformed into Van in the course of time.[6] In this respect, the title of B.B. Piotrovsky's *The Kingdom of Van (Urartu)* is a very meaningful and realistic emphasis.[7]

[3] Parpola 1970, 362; König 1955–57, 205; *UKN* 443; Diakonoff and Kashkai 1981, 88.
[4] *Cf.* Lynnch 1901, 56.
[5] Salvini 1967, 15–17; Diakonoff and Kashkai 1981, 19–21, 91; Tarhan 1994, 22; 2011, 288.
[6] *Cf.* Lynch 1901, 56.
[7] Piotrovsky 1966; for the term 'Vannic Kings', see Lynch 1901, 71.

Travellers, Research, Excavations

The first scientific studies in Van began with Friedrich Eduard Schulz. Schulz, a young German orientalist, went to Paris to study ancient Eastern languages and became a member of the Société Asiatique. In 1826, the 'French Research Society' commissioned him to conduct investigation first in Iran and then in Van. His investigation in Iran on ancient Zoroastrian texts was interrupted by the Russo-Persian War. He then arrived in Van in 1827. Van was a focal point for him as this was where he would investigate the 'City of Semiramis', mentioned in the work of Moses Khorenatsi (Moses of Khorene), a 5th-century AD author. In his work *Patmowt'iwn Hayots'* (History of the Armenians), very popular in those times in Europe, Moses described the story of the love between the Assyrian Queen Semiramis and the legendary hero of the Armenians, Ara:

> (no. 15) … Semiramis for many years had heard of his beauty and desired to visit him; but she was not able to do such things openly … Semiramis freely paraded her passion and sent messengers to the handsome Ara with gifts and offerings, requesting with many entreaties and promise of gifts that he come to her in Nineveh, either to marry her and reign over the whole empire that Ninos had ruled, or to satisfy her desires and then return to his own land in peace with magnificent gifts. Many times the ambassadors came and went, but Ara did not agree. Semiramis became exceedingly angry, and at the end of these negotiations she took the host of her army and hastened to the land of Armenia against Ara. But, as the result was to show, she was anxious not so much to kill him or put him to flight as to subject and dominate him to fulfil her desires. For in the folly of her great passion, at the reports about him she had become madly enflamed as if she had already seen him. She arrived in haste at the plain of Ara, which is called Ayrarat after his name. And when the battle line was formed, she ordered her generals that if possible they should attempt to keep Ara alive. But when the conflict was joined, the army of Ara was routed and Ara died in the battle at the hands of Semiramis' troops. The queen sent despoilers after the victory to the site of the battle to seek out her desired and loved one among the fallen corpses. They found Ara dead amid his warriors, and she ordered them to place him on the roof of her palace. When the Armenian army had regained its confidence to continue the struggle against Queen Semiramis and to revenge Ara's death, she said: 'I have ordered my gods to lick his wounds, and he will be restored to life.' At the same time she hoped to revive Ara by the magic of her sorcery … She also set up a new statue in the name of the gods and greatly honoured it with sacrifices, pretending to all that this power of her gods had brought Ara back to life … so bringing the war to an end.

The text also tells in detail how Semiramis had a splendid city constructed on the shore of Lake Van after the death of Ara:

> (no. 16) … Semiramis saw a hill stretching out to the sunset by the lake. It was sloping to the north and in the south, it was rising way up to the sky … After a careful investigation, Semiramis summoned 42,000 workers and 6000 stone

> masons, wood workers, bronze and iron smiths … First she ordered the construction of a canal. Allegedly, the canal today still stands in good condition. Then she had the workers divided into groups. In a few years, she had a magnificent city with strong fortifications and bronze gates built. She also had two-or three-storied splendid palaces adorned with various coloured stones constructed …The sections of the city she divided by beautiful and wide avenues. In the middle of the city she built some charming baths for people's needs, with admirable art. She diverted part of the river through the city to serve every necessity and for the irrigation of the parks and flower gardens. The rest she made run along the edge of the lake to the right and left, to water the city and all the surrounding area. All the regions east, north, and south of the city she adorned with villas and with leafy trees that produced varied fruit and foliage. There she planted many fruitful vineyards. The walled city she rendered absolutely splendid and magnificent, settling within a numberless multitude of inhabitants … She encircled the peak of the city with a wall. She had a royal palace and dungeons built in that area. The dungeons were very hard to enter and almost impossible to escape from … She had temples, rooms and caves hewn into the rocks, which, even today, are impossible to scratch even with a iron point. No one knows how they were built. She had many inscriptions carved on the rocks …

Semiramis' character can be described as malicious with a murderous spirit:

> (no. 17) … Since she was often reproached by her sons for her exceedingly lascivious and obscene character, she killed them all; only the youngest, Ninuas was saved … Her husband Ninos had not, as is said, died and been buried by her in the palace at Nineveh, but having realized her pernicious and evil way of life had abandoned his kingdom and fled to Crete. But when her sons attained maturity and understanding they reminded her of all this, thinking that they would make her desist from her demonic passion and that she would hand over the power and treasure to her sons. But at this she was even more incensed and slaughtered them all; only Ninuas remained, as we said above.[8]

Inspired by Moses's narration, Schulz refers to Van as 'Ville les Semiramis'.[9] Semiramis/Shamiram, that is, Shammuramat, was a well-known Babylonian princess and wife of the Assyrian king Shamshi-Adad V (823–811 BC). She reigned for five years as queen of Assyria after her husband's death. A contemporary of the powerful Urartian king Minua (*ca*. 810–785/780 BC), she was at enmity with Urartu. Actually, she did not have any role in the foundation of Tushpa.

The magnificent 'Canal of Semiramis' – symbol of love between Ara and Shammuramat – was indeed built by Minua. This canal, a magnificent work of architecture and engineering some 51 km in length, also known as Şamram

[8] Translation by R.W. Thomson. For M. Lauer's translation, see Salvini 2006, 135.
[9] Saint-Martin 1828; Schulz 1840, 290.

Kanalı, still irrigates the Van plain: 'By the might of the god Haldi, Minua, son of Ishpuini, laid this canal. Its name is the Minua Canal'.[10]

Unaware of these facts, Schulz investigated the Van Citadel and its monumental architectural features and copied 42 inscriptions including that of Xerxes (485–464 BC).[11] He sent his reports to Paris in 1828, but unfortunately was killed near Hakkâri/Çölemerik. Schulz's report was not published until 1840. His work laid the foundations for the later investigations. The signs of frustration in his report are striking:

> … Although Armenian writers wrote about the statues, reliefs and sculptures from the period of Semiramis that should be uncovered in Van Citadel; today, nothing remains neither in the citadel nor in or around the city. Anything could be endured to discover and bring into light at least a few of these monuments, however, all of my efforts were in vain …[12]

In fact, Schulz's report diverted the attention of European orientalists, who had been working on Assyria since the 19th century, to Van; because, for a long time, it had been suggested that all Urartian monuments belonged to the Assyrians.

In 1839, renowned architect and archaeologist Charles Texier visited Van and investigated the Van Citadel and the Old City of Van. His engravings are invaluable as they demonstrate the plan of the city and the appearance of both the city and the citadel at that time (Figs. 2–3).[13] In 1846, French traveller and geologist Xavier Hommaire de Hell, with his partner, painter Jules Laurens, arrived in Van. Laurens's engravings are also very important iconographic documents since they complement Texier's engravings (Figs. 4–5).[14]

In 1849, well-known British archaeologist Austen Layard, regarded as the founder of Near Eastern archaeology, visited Van with his assistant Hormuzd Rassam in 1849. He investigated the citadel, drew engravings of it and the plan of the monumental tomb of Argishti I (*ca*. 785/780–756 BC), and also depicted the inside of the tomb hall. In addition, during his visit, Layard copied the inscriptions in and around the citadel. He conducted a brief excavation on the north-eastern slope, in the sanctuary, referred to by the locals

[10] Lehmann-Haupt 1928, no. 46; König 1955–57, no. 30; *UKN* 56; Payne 2006, no. 5.2.8. There are 15 inscriptions on the rocks along the canal (see below). Some inscriptions begin with the titles of the king and end with 'curse prayer'. One of the inscriptions tells about a vineyard named Tariria, a royal name and a rare exception: 'This vineyard for Minua's wife Tariria. Its name is Taririahinili' (Lehmann-Haupt 1928, no. 57; König 1955–57, no. 40; *UKN* 111; Payne 2006, no. 5.2.10. See also Tarhan 2004, 338).

[11] Schulz 1840, 277.

[12] Schulz 1840, 296.

[13] Texier 1842, pls. 35–38.

[14] Hommaire de Hell 1855, 507, pls. 50–52.

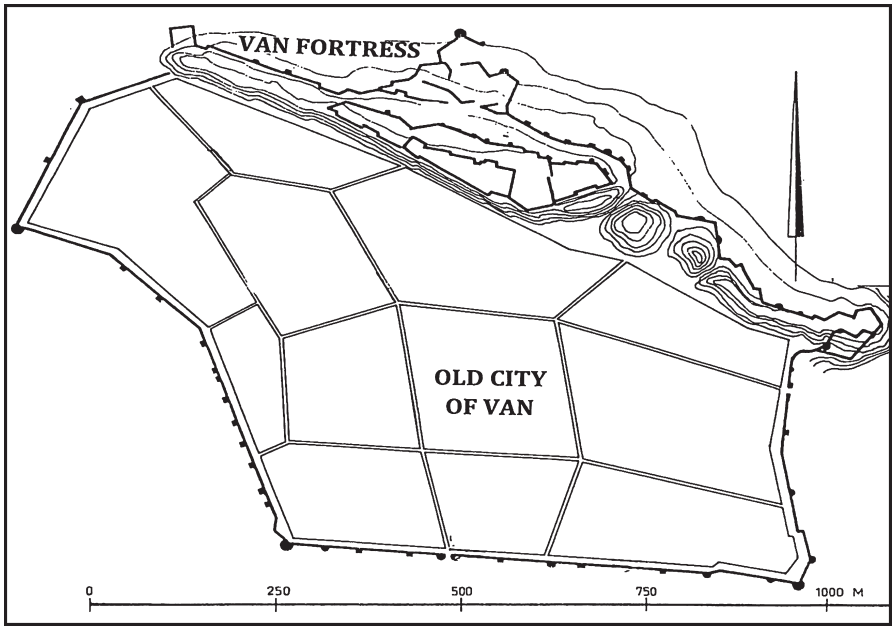

Fig. 2. Van Citadel and the Old City of Van in 1900. Plan prepared by a European traveller, adapted from Texier 1842, pl. 35, and Lynch 1901, 80–81 (author's archive).

as the 'Treasure Gate'. He then visited and explored Toprakkale and Meher Kapısı.[15] Layard also had a diplomatic identity and he played an important role in the realisation of Article 61 of the Treaty of Berlin signed by Russia, Britain and France in 1878 (whereby these powers officially took an interest in Ottoman reforms with respect to the 'Armenian Question'). The British officer Frederick Burnaby visited Van in 1876, H. Rassam visited it in 1877 and Henry Fanshawe Tozer in 1879. Their comparison of the inscription of Xerxes I on the southern cliff to a page of *The Times* is worth noting.[16]

The 1870s witnessed an increase in illegal digs and smuggling, particularly in Toprakkale, which was then followed by unsystematic excavations that resulted in irrecoverable harm to the sites.

In 1879–80, an expedition team from the British Museum worked in Van under the direction of the British vice-consul, Captain Emilius Clayton. Two engravings of the Van Citadel and the city, drawn by the French geologist, archaeologist and missionary Ernest Chantre in 1881, are remarkable.[17] These

[15] Layard 1853, 390–409.
[16] Burnaby 1877, 234; Tozer 1881, 343.
[17] Chantre 1889, 281.

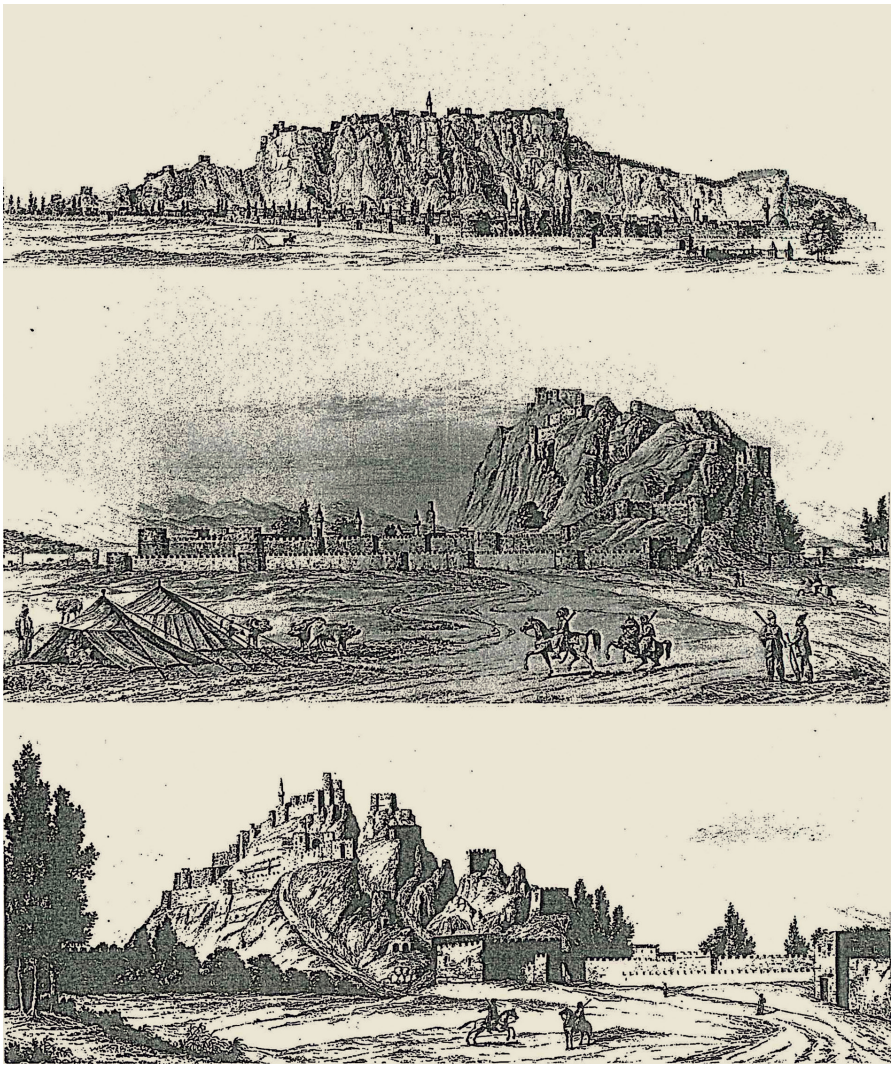

Fig. 3. C. Texier's engravings: Van Citadel and the Old City of Van in 1839, from the south, the south-east and north-west (after Texier 1842, pls. 36–38).

were followed by Paul-Müller Simonis's research, during which he drew the plan of both the citadel and the city for the second time after Texier.[18] In 1891, Waldemar Belck investigated Van and its surroundings.

[18] Müller-Simonis 1897, 135, 170, engravings 155, 171, 173.

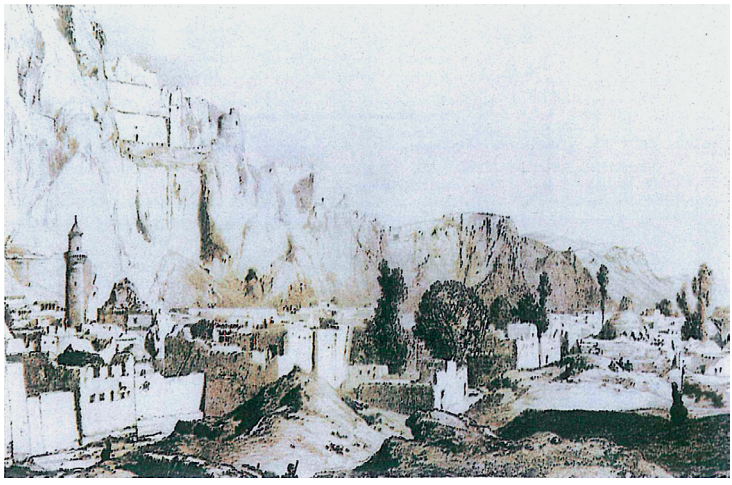

Fig. 4. Painting by Jules Laurens: Old City of Van and Van Citadel in 1846, from the south-west (after Hommaire de Hell 1855, pl. 1).

Fig. 5. Painting by Jules Laurens (after Hommaire de Hell 1855, pl. 51).

The important research and excavations on the Urartians began with the well-known German ancient historian, Carl Lehmann-Haupt and his close friend Belck. Lehmann-Haupt was, at first, assistant in the Egypt Gallery at the Berlin Museum. With a *firman* from Constantinople, he conducted intensive excavations in Toprakkale and Van that lasted for only a season at the end of 1898 and in 1899. A significant portion of the roughly 2000 pieces unearthed during the excavation and gathered from around, were taken to Berlin, with the permission of the Ottoman government. The research and find had broad repercussions in the scholarly world. Lehmann-Haupt then published, in three volumes, detailed results of all of the excavations and research he conducted in eastern Anatolia, especially in Toprakkale and Van: *Armenie einst und yetzt*.[19] In the meantime, he also compiled all Urartian inscriptions into a two-volume *Corpus Inscriptionum Chaldicarum*.[20] Lehmann-Haupt returned to Turkey between 1915 and 1918. A short time after the beginning of the First World War and Turkey's entry into it, he was in Constantinople to teach ancient history at İstanbul Dârü'l Fünûn with the title of müderris – an Ottoman term corresponding to professor. 'Dârü'l Fünûn' became Istanbul University with the 1933 reforms.

British traveller Henry Blosse Lynch also came to Van in 1898 to conduct extensive research. The fact that in his work, he told about the Urartian kings under the 'Vannic Kings' heading and by using the term 'Vannic empire', is striking. Chapters 2–4 of his book covered only Van. In addition, Lynch also elaborated Müller-Simonis's plan of Van and its surroundings.[21]

The renowned German scholar Walter Bachmann visited Van in 1911 and took photographs of the Grand Mosque/Ulu Camiî before it was demolished.[22] Bachmann also drew the plan of the mosque during his stay. Russian scholars Nikolai Marr and Iosif Orbeli began research and excavations in Toprakkale on behalf of the Imperial Russian Archaeological Society in 1911 and 1912 respectively.

During the First World War, in 1915, the Armenians rebelled again and Russians invaded Van. The city changed hands between Russians, Turks and Armenians during combats between 1915 and 1917. In the meantime, in 1916, Orbeli excavated Van Citadel while Marr excavated Toprakkale.[23] In 1918, Van was once again under Turkish rule. However, the city was in ruins and showed the sorrowful and painful traces of desolation.

[19] Lehmann-Haupt 1910; 1926; 1931. See also Lehmann-Haupt 1900; 1907.
[20] Lehmann-Haupt 1928; 1935.
[21] Lynch 1901, 1–76, for the plan, see 80–81.
[22] Bachmann 1913, 73.
[23] See Marr and Orbeli 1922.

Between 1937 and 1940, American scholars arrived in Van to conduct research: Edward Bowen Reilly conducted excavations in Tilkitepe near the airport, while Kirsopp and Silva Lake conducted excavations at Van Citadel, in the Old City of Van, in Toprakkale, Tilkitepe and in Kalecik. Kirsopp Lake was a theologian of British origin who later became a professor of history in the United States of America. In 1944, Istanbul University organised the Fifth Annual Universities' Week in Van. For the first time, Turkish scholars emphasised the importance of Van in a series of lectures.

In 1956, British archaeologist Charles Burney investigated Van Citadel and its mound. His surveys between 1956 and 1957 at Urartian fortresses contributed greatly to the understanding of Urartu and research on Urartu was now firmly on the agenda of scholars.[24]

The first Turkish excavations were initiated by a team led by Afif Erzen and a scientific committee including Emin Bilgiç, Yusuf Boysal and Baki Öğün from Ankara University. Between 1959 and 1961 excavations were carried out at Toprakkale; Van Citadel was investigated in 1959 and in 1960. In 1963, a dig was conducted in the mound. In 1961, Erzen began the Çavuştepe-*Sardurihinili* excavations which lasted until 1988. Erzen, the leading figure of Urartian investigations in Turkey, established the Centre for Historical and Archaeological Research in the Van Region at Istanbul University Faculty of Letters in Van. After its establishment, research and excavations conducted in Van gained momentum: Erzen conducted excavations in Toprakkale between 1976 and 1977, and at Van Citadel between 1972 and 1975.[25]

In 1969, the Italian linguist Mirjo Salvini studied the Urartian inscriptions from the Van Citadel and Van Museum.[26] His studies were followed by those of Ali Dinçol, from Istanbul University, in Çavuştepe and at Van Citadel.[27]

Between 1972 and 1973, Rudolf Naumann, the Director of the German Institute of Archaeology in Istanbul, and his team, in collaboration with Erzen, worked on photogrammetric plans at the Van Citadel. In 1975, a team led by Haydar Bora, with the assistance of the General Directorate of Maps, conducted terrestrial and aerial photogrammetric surveys and revised plans of Çavuştepe and Van Citadel.

In the same year, the first draft plans of the Van Citadel were prepared by the present author for the Historical National Park Project. Between 1983 and 1987 I carried out extensive preliminary work on the National Park of

[24] Burney 1957; 1958.
[25] See Erzen 1974; 1975; 1977.
[26] Salvini 1973.
[27] See Dinçol and Dinçol 1986.

Van Citadel and the Old City of Van.[28] In 1986, at the request of the General Directorate of Monuments and Sites of the Ministry of Culture, I prepared the material on the citadel and Old City as candidates for inclusion in UNESCO's World Heritage List. Between 1987 and 1991, I continued the Citadel and Old City excavations for the project mentioned above. Veli Sevin was the co-director of these excavations.[29] In the meantime 'areas for conservation sites' were redefined and widened. The reedy area known as the bird sanctuary, by the lake in the west, was taken under protection as a natural site. Between 1983 and 1991, plans of all Urartian monumental structures in the citadel were redrawn and their identifying architectural drawings were produced.[30] In these years (1983–93), I was the Director of the Research Centre in Van.

In 1997, Abdüsselam Uluçam began excavations at the Hüsrev Pasha Mosque and its külliye (an Ottoman architectural concept that designates a complex of buildings centred upon a mosque) in the Old City. Uluçam published all historical structures in the city including the Suleyman the Magnificent Mosque/ Süleyman Han Câmîi at the fortress, other mosques, prayer rooms, baths, warehouses, domes and churches providing detailed sources of plans, photographs and reliefs.[31] Van Citadel, Old City and mound excavations are being conducted by my assistant Erkan Konyar since 2010.

Location

The Tushpa Citadel is located on a precipice in the middle of the fertile Van plain (Fig. 6). The famous Ottoman traveller Evliyâ Çelebi, who visited Van in 1655, gives detailed information on the site and compares it to 'a camel that has kneeled down under the weight it is carrying' (*Seyâhatnâme* 4. 542). The calcareous precipice along the east–west direction is 1.50 km long, while it is 70–80 m wide on the north–south axis (Fig. 7). Attacks from the south were prevented by the steep cliff which rises up to 100 m (Fig. 8). The design of the structures in the Citadel demonstrates the prowess of Urartian structural engineering in choosing locations. Urartians made the utmost use of the natural

[28] See Tarhan 1985; 1986a.

[29] Tarhan 1989; Tarhan and Sevin 1990; 1991; 1993; 1994.

[30] Further, I prepared a 'Preservation and Development Project for the Van Gevaş Fortress and Historical Turkish Cemeteries and their Environs' between 1989 and 1992. I also, together with V. Sevin, conducted rescue excavations and landscape arrangements in Van Gevaş.

[31] Uluçam 2000, 10–80, figs. 1–78, plan and sections 1–23. See p. 14 for these buildings on the plan of Van Citadel and the Old City.

Fig. 6. Van Citadel and the Old City of Van (author's archive).

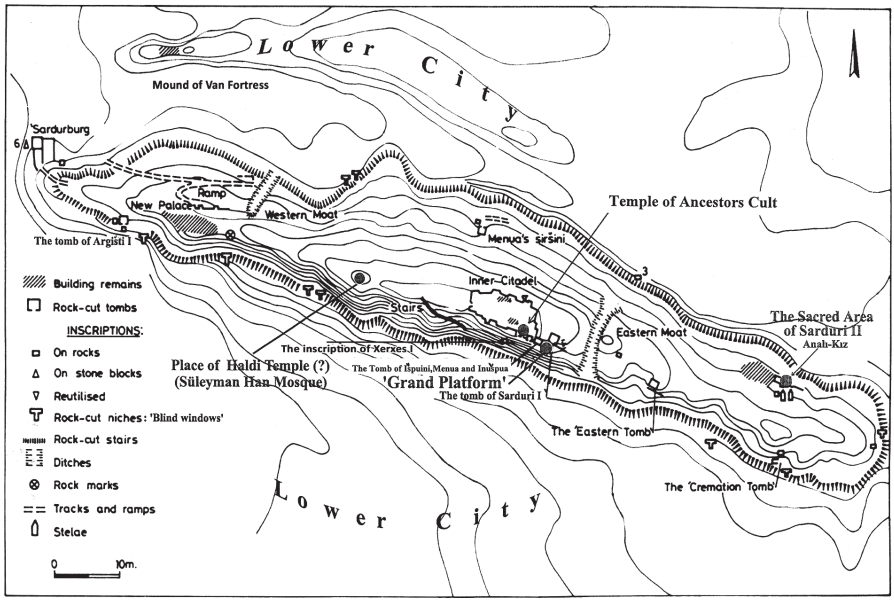

Fig. 7. Plan of Tushpa (drawing by A. Şakar and Ü. Sirel).

Fig. 8. Van Citadel from the south-west (author's archive).

features of the topography. A strong fortification system was built on the northern slopes by making use of both the cliffs and natural terraces (Fig. 9). The impenetrable high fortification walls completely surrounded the Upper Citadel and Inner Fortress in an echelon form, starting from the slopes, enabling a stepped defensive system. The Upper Citadel was also bordered on the east and the west by two steep ditches hewn into the bedrock, i.e. by two artificial hurdles. The 'sloped road' leading to the Upper Citadel and Inner Fortress (Fig. 7) is located on the north-western slope. It is still possible to trace this thousands-of-years old road. Extensions of the strong foundation beds hewn into the bedrock, the remains of ashlar limestone blocks of the fortifications and the terraces explicitly show how the convenient slopes in the northwest and the topography were used in astute designs.

Abundant water sources were found at the foot of the precipice, a fact that was noted by Evliyâ Çelebi: '… Springs come out from below the rock of Van … Hor Hor water is strong enough to operate a mill. The spring in the inner

Fig. 9. Van Citadel from the north-east (author's archive).

part of Tebriz Gate is so clear that it tastes like fresh water …' (Seyâhatnâme 4. 542).[32]

In terms of the requirements for a capital, the Tushpa Citadel enjoys a unique location. Strategically, it is located on the most important point in the Urartian heartland in the Lake Van basin. It is the focal point of the historical roads leading to the Van plain and commands the coastal plain bordered by mountain ranges such as Erek. These fertile lands were made even more fertile with irrigation canals, underground irrigation tunnels, ponds and dams. For instance, the Minua/Semiramis-Şamram Canal still irrigates today the lands in the south of the Van plain.[33] On the other hand, the Rusa II Dam, known as the Keşiş Göl barrage, irrigates the area in the east of the plain.[34] Surrounding the Lower City of Tushpa, there were royal vineyards, orchards, groves and woods which extended throughout the plain.[35] This garden tradition lived on after the Urartians until recent times. The detailed plans of the Old City of Van and its surroundings drawn by several scholars clearly show how large the gardens were.[36]

[32] Regarding the water spring, see below p. 706.

[33] Belli 1994, on the map p. 113; 2001, 362, fig. 9, one of the canal's inscription. See above for details of the Semiramis Canal and Minua.

[34] Belli 1994, 109–13, figs. 33–34; 2001, 363, figs. 10–11.

[35] For the inscriptions, see König 1955–57, nos. 121, 123; *UKN* 277, 268; Payne 2006, nos. 11.2.3, 12.2.3.

[36] Texier 1842, pl. 35; Müller-Simonis 1897, 135; Lynch 1901, 80–81; Lehmann-Haupt 1926, inset sheet.

The transition to irrigated farming, particularly in the Van region, as a result of canals and other facilities, is one of the most remarkable accomplishments of the Urartian kingdom.[37]

The capital Tushpa lived its golden ages under the reign of several mighty kings. Beginning with Sarduri I (*ca*. 840–830 BC), during the reigns of Ishpuini (*ca*. 830–820 BC), Minua (*ca*. 820–810 BC), Argishti I (*ca*. 785/780–756 BC), Sarduri II (*ca*. 756–730 BC) and Rusa II (*ca*. 685–645 BC), the kingdom grew powerful and expanded its boundaries. The state was institutionalised in every aspect, including religion. It was a centralised theocratic kingdom, composed of classes such as the elites, soldiers, farmers, villagers and slaves.

The capital appointed the provincial governors (*LÚ.EN.NAM*) and maintained strong armed forces composed of cavalry, foot soldiers and chariots. The soldiers were equipped with armour, helmets, shields, swords, spears, axes, pommels, arrows and bows. A large standing army, called the royal guard, was always ready by the king at the capital. This special army protected the king and the capital. In times of war, the king, heading his army, was seen off from Tushpa with ceremonies and then was welcomed when he returned. The king and his army were also under the protection of the chief god Haldi, the 'great god of war' and 'warrior god'. The repeating statements emphasising this in the king's annals and inscriptions that cover the battles starting from the Ishpuini and Minua periods are clear proofs: '… God Haldi went on a battle with his spear … God Haldi is strong and god Haldi's spear is also strong …', '… They went on a battle … by the might of the God Haldi …', '… God Haldi was in front …'.

The scale and capacity of the storage rooms in the Urartian fortresses and in Tushpa, where all the food and drink was stored, is remarkable. For instance, an inscription of Minua hewn into the bedrock at the north-west tip of the Citadel reads: 'By the might of the god Haldi, Ishpuini, son of Minua, has this grain storage built. It holds 23,100 *kapi*.'[38] It seems that the rulers, elites and village farmers appropriated an adequate portion from the total production and the surplus was either paid as a tax to the state or sent to Tushpa. These logistical and economic measures resulted in the establishment of permanent sources of income. In addition, they allowed for a standing army and provided an effective precaution system against any enemy incursion, natural disasters like drought, famine, flood and harsh winters.[39]

[37] Tarhan 2011, 290.
[38] Salvini 1973, 279, no. 1; Payne 2006, no. 5.4.13.
[39] Tarhan 1983, 305; 1986b, 296; 2011, 292.

Apart from the royal family, the Citadel of Tushpa was inhabited by priests, prominent elites and generals. It was one of the most populous and spectacular Anatolian capitals of the first half of the 1st millennium BC. It was estimated that the total population of Tushpa, together with the Citadel and the Lower City, was not under 50,000.[40]

A tablet belonging to the last powerful king, Rusa II, who moved the administrative centre to Rusahinili/Toprakkale in the 7th century BC, mentions 5507 people living in and around the palace of Rusahinili. The text also gives enough information about the identities of some individuals, palace residents and administrative bureaucracy, which is similar to Assyria, along with the numbers of the royal household: 1113 of them were palace residents. Of 3784 eunuchs, 2409 were page boys, 119 were treasurers, 68 were textile workers, 108 were harem servants and 1118 were either dog-walkers or musicians. There were also 168 palace servants and 390 guards.[41] Compared with that of Rusahinili, which was founded on a steep rocky outcrop of the Erek mountains (3250 m) to the west of the Van plain, the area covered by the Tushpa Citadel is suggested to have a higher population than Rusahinili mentioned above. The number of women and girls in the harem of Minua, for example, is praised: 'No other king had brought his harem women this much.'[42]

The capital Tushpa never lost its importance, its monumental tombs of the ancestors, the ancestors' cult, sanctuaries, temples, palaces; and the Lower City standing with all its splendour. These monuments are undeniable witnesses of the past and a source of pride. Thus, until the collapse of the kingdom, all of the Urartian kings proudly used the title 'Master of Tushpa'/ *alusi* ^{URU}*Tušpa* URU.[43]

The capital also witnessed some unfortunate events, one of which is told in detail in the Assyrian texts. Rusa I (*ca*. 730–714/3 BC), who was distressed due to the heavy pressure of the eighth campaign led by the famous Assyrian king Sargon II (*ca*. 721–705 BC), the fall of the sacred city of Musasir, successive defeats, and the unrelenting incursions of the Cimmerians from the Caucasus, in the end committed suicide:

> … Ursa of the Urartian: - Assur, my lord, gave me courage and with one of my chariots and 1000 of my 'rough riders' and foot soldiers, who are mighty in battle, over the mountains … steep mountains, where the terrain was favourable, I advanced on horseback, where it was bad, on foot. And Urzana of Mushashir

[40] Burney 1972, 183.

[41] König 1955–57, no. 131; *UKN* 286; Diakonoff 1963, no. 12; Tarhan 1983, 303; 1986b, 293; 2011, 292; Payne 2006, 299, no. 12.3.5.

[42] König 1955–57, nos. 18–20; *UKN* 34–35; Salvini 2006, 215.

[43] Tarhan 2007d, 117; 2011, 293.

> hear of approach of my expeditions and fled like a bird (owl), climbing the steep mountain. Mushashir, the abode of the god Haldi, I besieged and the wife of Urzana, his sons, his daughters, 6170 people, 690 mules and asses, 920 cattle, 100,225 sheep, I brought out (therefrom); 34 talents, 18 *minas* of gold, 160 talents, 2.5 *minas* of silver, white bronze, lead together with a bronze bull, a bronze cow, a bronze calf, … I carried off … to Assur I brought them in … … … Haldia and Bagbartum, his gods, with their rich trappings, I counted as spoil. Ursâ, king of Urartu, heard the destruction of Mushashir, the carrying off of Haldia, his god, and with his own hands ended his life with his iron girdle dagger. Over Urartu, to its farthest border, I brought mourning, the people who dwelt therein I plunged into lamentation and sighing.

Another text says:

> … Ursâ of Urartu, – the splendour of Assur, my Lord, overwhelmed him and with his own iron dagger he stabbed himself through the heart, like a pig and ended his life. [44]

Monumental Buildings of Tushpa

The Citadel of Tushpa is crowded with splendid buildings each of which exemplifies the authenticity and magnificence of Urartian architecture. Together with royal tombs, temples, sanctuaries, palaces, rock inscriptions, steles and fortifications, the capital itself is a magnificent monument. In addition to the *in-situ* inscriptions seen in and around the Citadel, steles used in later times as building material, over 100 other inscriptions found on steles, plinths and on other pieces are all significant documents that prove the importance of the capital and the countless building activities.

The two earliest monuments, whose inscriptions show that they belong to the 'foundation' period, should have the priority. These *in-situ* inscriptions were written in Assyrian cuneiform script and in the Assyrian language.

Sardursburg/Madırburç

It is situated at the western end of the fortress on the north-western slope of Van Citadel (Fig. 7). It was named Sardursburg by Lehmann-Haupt in 1898. It is also known locally as Mardırburç.[45] It was built by Sarduri I and is the earliest royal monument of Tushpa. It is the platform of a magnificent building

[44] *ARAB* II, 22 (for suicides of Ursa), 59. See also *ARAB* II, 20, 56; Tarhan 1984, 110; 2011, 293. For details of these events, see Salvini 2006, 89–109.

[45] Lehmann-Haupt 1907, 61, fig. 37; 1926, 18–23.

Fig. 10. Sardursburg, from the Van Citadel, north-eastern view (author's archive).

(Fig. 10). It is rectangular in plan and measures 47 × 13 m. It is oriented in the north–south direction and the height of the existing five courses of stones is on average 4 m (Fig. 11). The huge, finely cut limestone blocks weigh 8–10 tons.[46] On these blocks are building inscriptions (three on the eastern façade and three on the western façade) that are located on different levels and repeated six times (Fig. 12). In the texts, Sarduri I designates himself with various titles. Especially with his 'king of the world/universe' title, he challenges his sworn enemy Assyria in Assyrian language and conveys that they are equals:

> Inscription of Sarduri, son of Lutipri, great king, mighty king, king of the universe, king of the land of Nairi, king to whom there is no equal, king with no fear of battle and king who brings to kneel those in defiance. Sarduri, son of Lutipri, king of kings, who from every king has received tribute. Thus speaks Sarduri, son of Lutipri: I have brought these stones from the town of Alniunu (and) have constructed this wall[47] (Fig. 13).

[46] Tarhan 1986a, 305, figs. 10–13; 1994, 24; 2011, 302, figs. 2–3.

[47] Schulz 1840, no. 1; Lehmann-Haupt 1928, nos. 1–3; König 1955–57, no. 1a–c; Bilgiç 1959, 44, pls. 42–43; *UKN* 1–3; Salvini 1967, 13; Payne 2006, no. 1.1.1–4.

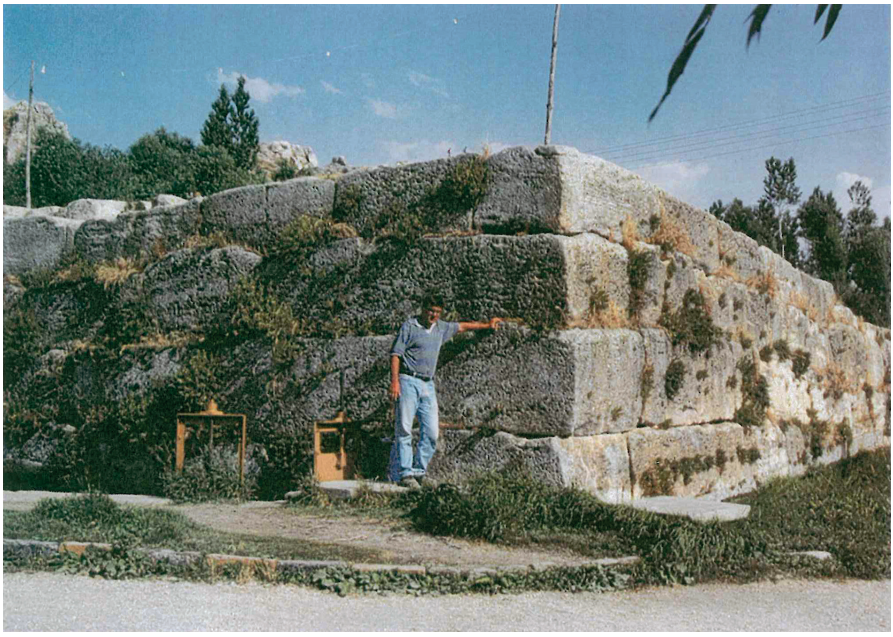

Fig. 11. Sardursburg from the north-western corner
(photograph by A. Çilingiroğlu).

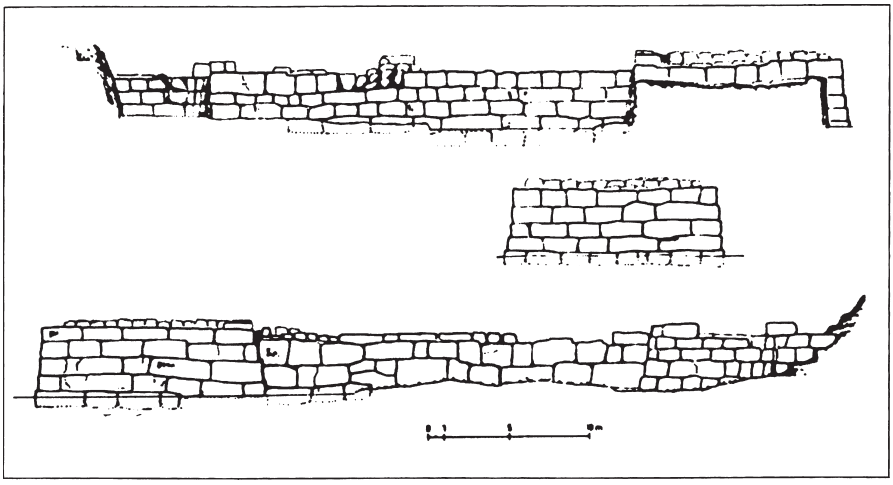

Fig. 12. Sardursburg: measured drawings of the eastern, northern and western façades
(drawing by Ü. Sirel).

Fig. 13. The inscription at the north-western corner (author's archive).

In their 1938–39 campaign, the Lake unearthed the other three inscriptions at the eastern façade.[48] This building was also excavated by Erzen in 1973–74.[49] Since Lehmann-Haupt's time, a wide range of theories has been put forward with regard to the function of Sardursburg: port building, pier, jetty, propylaeum to the Citadel, temple podium, a sort of fortification to protect the water sources, etc.[50] The coast line of Lake Van was undoubtedly close to the Citadel in the Urartian period. Lake Van was referred to as 'Nairi's Upper Sea/Nairi's Wavey Sea' by the Assyrians. If the rough waves of Lake Van had reached the Sardursburg, the inscription on the west façade in particular would have been worn out or destroyed. We should consider this fact to start with.

If it had been a propylaeum, how could these high walls have been surpassed and how could the undoubtedly magnificent gate of entry have been reached? The temple podium explanation is equally unlikely due to its location and dimensions. Also, had this been the case, Sarduri should have used the expression '… I had this temple built'. We believe that this splendid fortification was protecting the western end of the fortress, which is also the lowest area of the citadel, as well as the water sources nearby. The fortification also controlled and observed the sloped road leading to the Upper Citadel.[51]

The Sacred Rock Niche with Assyrian Inscription

This is located outside the Upper Citadel, to the east of the Eastern Moat and is the earliest rock monument known of the capital. It was discovered by Lehmann-Haupt and Belck in 1898. The rock-cut niche, whose façade faces south is virtually destroyed, while the text on the east and west walls can be barely read. A pedestal socket on the base of the niche proves the prior existence of a stele (Fig. 14). In front of the stele, a rock platform extends towards the south. This area was certainly a sanctuary. The Assyrian inscription is a sacrificial list of a cult, but no king or deity name has been discovered. Lehmann-Haupt named it 'Opfernische' (sacrificial niche). It was correctly dated to the reign of Sarduri I due to the style of the text. As the Sardursburg/Madırburç inscriptions show, the cuneiform tradition and the Assyrian (derived from the Akkadian and old Babylonian) school was current during this reign.[52] Thus the niche must have

[48] See Korfmann 1977, 178, 183, 197, 200, pls. 11–15.
[49] Erzen 1974, 549; 1975, 561.
[50] Tarhan 1994, 24, n. 2.
[51] For various suggestions as to its purpose, see Tarhan 1994, 24, n. 2; 2011, 303.
[52] For different views, see Salvini 2006, 42.

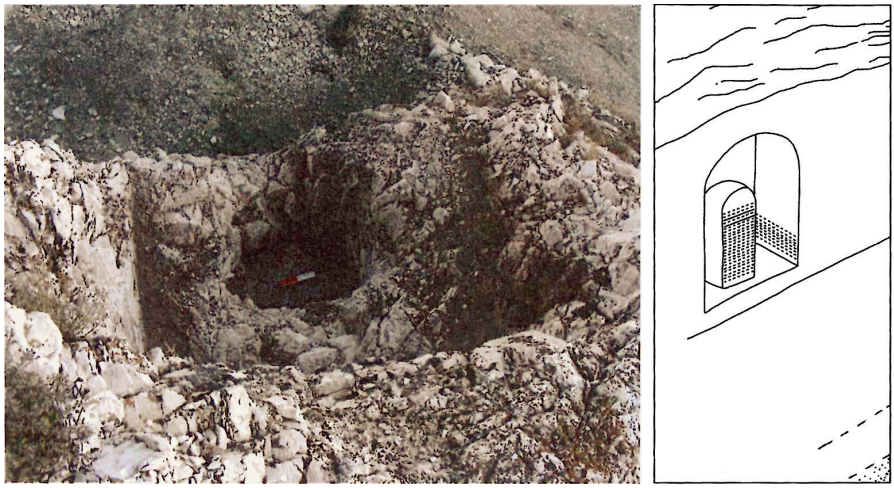

Fig. 14. Sacred rock niche with Assyrian inscription and tentative reconstruction (photograph by E. Konyar; drawing by author).

been the earliest sanctuary and its inscription the earliest written document of Tushpa.[53]

Inner Fortress: This is the highest area of the Rock of Van. The area, including the steep cliff to the south, is surrounded by strong fortification walls (Fig. 7). The fortification wall in the northern sector, approximately 7–8 m high, is dated to the Urartian period (Fig. 15). The upper mud-brick and stone sections are the products of various periods and phases stretching from the collapse of the kingdom until the end of the First World War. No other period could come close to surpassing the Urartian. Entrance to the Inner Fortress is from the west and is reached via the slightly sloped road.[54]

Our studies between 1988 and 1991 aimed to shed light on the stratigraphy and the 9th-century BC Urartian architecture. The finds provided us with solid and striking evidence of Urartian royal building and religion. The earliest palaces of the capital were located there. A Haldi temple certainly existed in the Upper Citadel, most probably in the Inner Fortress. The 'Tebriz Gate' inscription from the 'common reign' of Ishpuini-Minua-Inushpua (*ca*. 810–785/780 BC), located in the east of the Rock of Van, in my opinion strongly supports this

[53] Lehmann-Haupt 1900, 143, 619–20, 626; 1926, 26; 1928, no. III; König 1955–57, no. 31; *UKN* 297–298; Salvini 1982, 332, nos. 1–2; Dinçol and Dinçol 1986, 351, pls. 1–5; Payne 2006, no. 14.1.14, fig. 124; Tarhan 2007c, 761–65, figs. 1–4.

[54] Tarhan 1994, 26, figs. 3, 8; 2001, 161, fig. 3; 2011, 306, figs. 5–6.

Fig. 15. Northern walls of the Inner Fortress, from the north-eastern corner (author's archive).

view: '… We had Haldi's susi (tower-temple) built …'.[55] But the deep filling of thousands of years has covered completely the magnificent buildings. The existence of a deep filling in the Inner Fortress was evident in the soundings of Erzen in 1974.[56]

The Temple of the Ancestors' Cult

The temple is located in the south-eastern part and the highest section of the Inner Fortress (Fig. 16). It is probably the earliest temple of Tushpa and a previously unknown example of Urartian architecture. It comprises of two rooms built back to back (Fig. 17). The foundation elevations of the ground and of the walls were hewn out of bedrock. The overall thickness of the walls (1.70 m) indicates a high building.[57] The dimensions and the stepped recesses frames in the doorways[58] which remind us of the typical square-planned

[55] König 1955–57, no. 12; *UKN* 18; Payne 2006, no. 4.1.1.
[56] Erzen 1977, 14, section drawings on figs. 13–14.
[57] Tarhan and Sevin 1990, 361, 369, figs. 8–9; Tarhan 1994, 32, fig. 8A, 33; Salvini 2006, 169.
[58] Tarhan and Sevin 1975, 403, figs. 1–3.

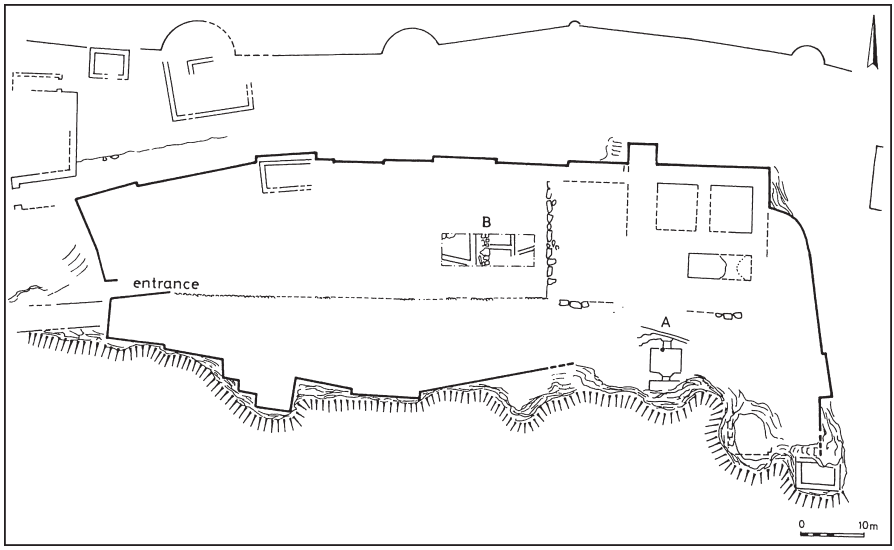

Fig. 16. Plan of the Inner Fortress (drawing by Ü. Sirel).

Urartian 'tower-temples', are the same except that our temple has double cellae. It is a unique building. In my view, it was related to the 'ancestors' cult', since immediately below it, on the 'Grand Platform' to the the south-east of the Inner Fortress, are the earliest monumental royal tombs. As a token of a new tradition in a new capital, this building must have been dedicated to the 'ancestors' cult'. Logically, one would expect a Haldi temple on this highest place of the Citadel.[59]

An interesting detail conveyed by Evliyâ Çelebi regarding the Haldi temple should be noted: that under the foundation of Suleyman Han Mosque, here,

> … This Rock of Van has been taken over by several states. 1600 years before the birth of Prophet Mohammed, during times of Prophet Davut, Melik Câlut had a large temple built on this Rock of Van … 881 years before the birth of the Prophet, Alexander the Great conquered the fortress. Alexander the Great named this temple as 'Vânun/Vanik', a term used by the locals to refer to a 'place for worshipping'. In later times, the name transformed into 'Van' … The temple was then reconditioned by Sultan Süleyman and named as Suleyman the Magnificent Mosque … (*Seyahâtnâme* 4. 538).

[59] Tarhan 2011, 306, fig. 7.

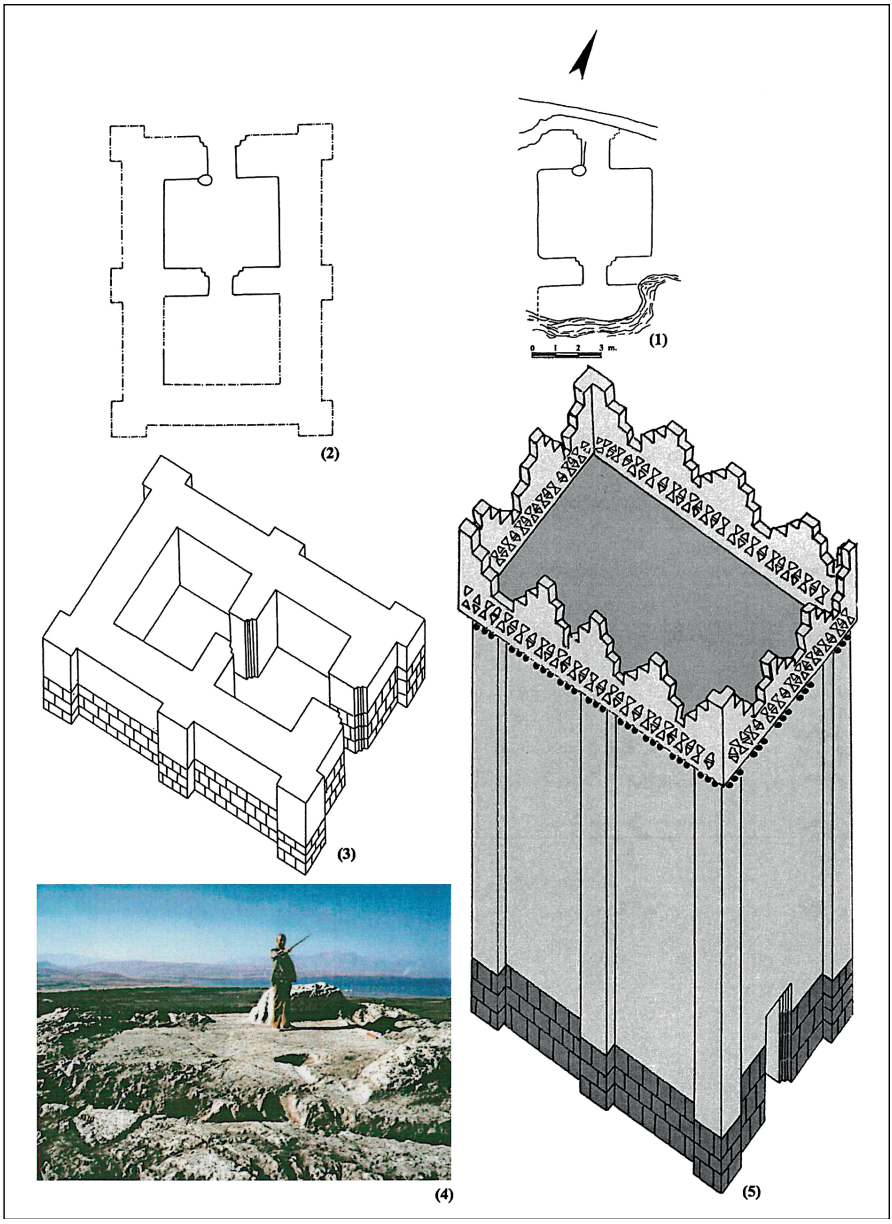

Fig. 17. The 'temple of the ancestors' cult': plan and tentative reconstruction (author's archive; drawings by author).

Our team conducted restoration, excavation and sounding work between 1987 and 1988 and discovered some very important findings. The sources we present here emphasise that the mosque was built on the foundations of an old temple. The continuity in such sacred buildings is a reflection of a common tradition. However, it was thought to be risky to continue our work before necessary precautions were taken to stabilise the site. On the other hand, sadly, artefact smugglers have caused significant damage in the area.[60]

Older Palace

Another interesting architectural remain in Trench B, a monumental and magnificent platform wall, was unearthed in the central part of the Inner Fortress (Fig. 16). Its eastern face is built from three courses of huge dressed limestone blocks reaching a height of 2.20 m. The size of these blocks is second only to those of Sardursburg/Madırburç, a clear indication that the structure dates to an early period. This platform certainly belonged to a monumental royal building, perhaps forming part of the eastern side of the 'Older Palace'.[61]

Thousand Steps

Rock-cut steps, starting from the steep cliff in the south and leading to a water source in the Lower City, were named as 'the Thousands Steps' by the mediaeval sources and are still called by the same name by the locals (Figs. 7, 18). Evliyâ Çelebi describes the Thousand Steps' as follows:

> … Nobody dares to look from this side of the fortress wall. Here is a path, called Suluk Kulesi (Water Tower) path, hewn into the rocks that face the Lower City. There are a thousand narrow rock steps from the highest point of the Upper Citadel to the rock of Hor Hor Water. The reason for which these rock steps were built by Kılıç Arslan as they were, was to prevent any congestion during sieges. Below this fortress rock of Van is spring water called 'Hor Hor' that operates the mill wheel. Coming from Debbağhane, this water irrigates the surrounding vineyards and gardens and meets Lake Van. It is a beautiful water … (*Seyahâtnâme* 4. 543).

It is shown in a 17th-century Ottoman plan with the description 'tarîk-i âb-ı lezîz dür', i.e. 'path to sweet water source' (Fig. 19.9). In the 1987 campaign, the upper steps were cleaned up to the first platform.[62]

[60] Tarhan and Sevin 1989, 379–84, 406–12, figs. 23–33; 1990, 358–61, 367, 368, figs. 5–7. See also Uluçam 2000, 25–27, plan 4, figs. 17–19.

[61] Tarhan and Sevin 1993, 408, 414–16, figs. 1B, 4; Tarhan 1994, 32, fig. 8B. For new excavations and finds in 2012, see Konyar 2013, 29.

[62] Tarhan 1989, 384, 404, fig. 21; 2001, 307, 309, fig. 8; see Lehmann-Haupt 1926, 143, 163.

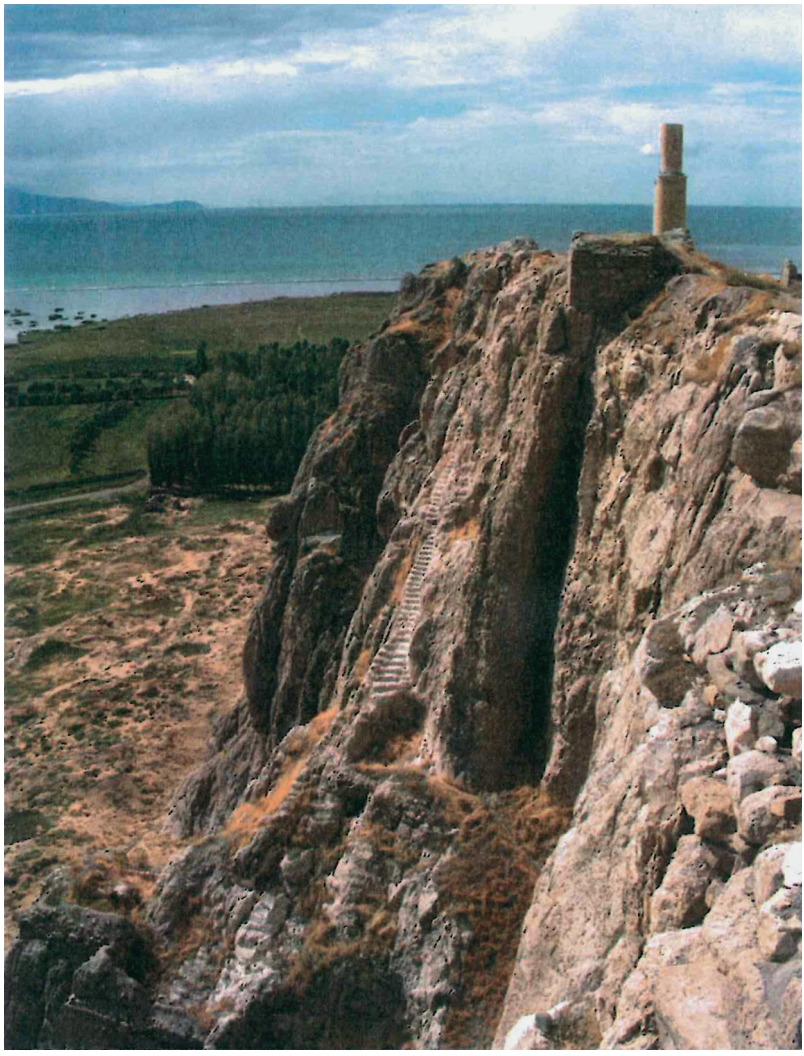

Fig. 18. The 'Thousand Steps' from the east (photograph by E. Konyar).

Royal Tombs

The magnificent royal tombs of fine workmanship in the Citadel are masterpieces of Urartian rock architecture. They are located on the side of the Rock of Van, facing the south, immediately below the Inner Fortress. The earliest royal tombs are on the 'Grand Platform' and the others are grouped in the western and eastern areas outside the moats. Their façades face the cliff to

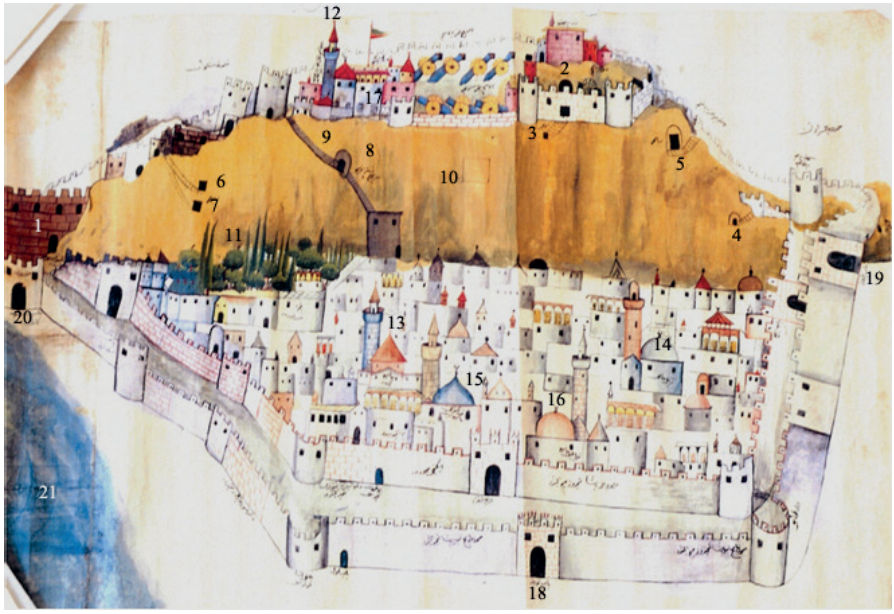

Fig. 19. Van Citadel and the Old City of Van, 17th century Ottoman miniature 'Kal'e-i Seng-i Vân/Fortress of Van Rock' (Topkapı Palace Archive handwritings, catalogue no. E. 94 87). (1) Sardursburg, (2) Tomb of Sarduri I, (3) The Little Tomb under the 'Grand Platform', (4) 'Cremation Tomb', (5) 'Eastern Tomb', (6) Tomb of Argishti I, (7) Tomb of 'Little Horhor Cave', (8) 'Little Tomb' below the Inner Fortress, (9) 'Thousand Steps', (10) Inscription of Xerxes I, (11) 'Horhor Gardens', (12) Suleyman the Magnificent Mosque–Süleyman Han Câmîi, (13) Grand Mosque-Ulu Câmîi/Câmî-i Kebir', (14) Sinaneddin Mosque–Sinâneddîn Câmîi/ Red Minared–Kızıl Minare, (15) Husrev Pasha Mosque–Hüsrev Paşa Câmîi, (16) Kaya Chelebi Mosque–Kaya Çelebi Câmîi, (17) Pascha Palace–Paşa Sarayı, (18) Middle Gate–Orta Kapı/'Bâb-ı Orta', (19) Tebriz Gate–Tebriz Kapı, (20) Port Building Gate–İskele Kapı, (21) Lake Van–Van Gölü (numbering by author).

the south. These monumental structures comprise of a large main hall and burial chambers connected to it. The main hall probably housed the tomb of the king and religious ceremonies were held there regularly. The position of these tombs, a part of the mysterious 'ancestors' cult', shows clearly that the inhabitants of the Tushpa Citadel, the kings and families, lived together with the souls of their 'founder' father, grandfathers and deceased ancestors. This is a characteristic of Tushpa and also a unique feature that we do not observe in other Iron Age capitals.[63]

[63] Tarhan 2001, 162; 2003, 93, 96; 2004, 340; 2007, 122; 2011, 309.

These rock structures, which were defined as 'caves' by Evliyâ Çelebi and were similarly referred to as 'caves' in the 17th-century Ottoman plan and also by several Western travellers, functioned as arsenal, food and arms warehouse and sometimes as dungeons (*Seyahâtnâme* 4. 536, 541).[64]

Monumental Tomb of Sarduri I

It is named the 'Naptha Well Tomb–Neft Kuyusu Mezarı' or 'Tomb of Minua' (Figs. 7, 20).[65] Evliyâ Çelebi's accounts also include a detailed explanation of 'neft oil' which should be related to this tomb (*Seyahâtnâme* 4. 537). The Grand Platform, which is reached by rock steps from above, was certainly built for this tomb (Fig. 20). A monumental façade was formed by carving the rock surfaces facing the south. The upper and eastern parts of the façade are demarcated by broad embossed mouldings (Figs. 21–22). Most probably, members of the royal family attended the religious ceremonies in this open area while sitting on a high bench. We may also presume that sacred votive objects dedicated to the spirits of the ancestors were placed on the bench.

The rock steps ascending from the platform lead to a vaulted gate, 2.80 m high, on which a window-like light opening is to be found. The door shaft socket carved in the ground of the gate wing is inside and to the right of the threshold. We can infer from this that the gate has one wing. Other monumental tombs are similar in this respect. We believe that it is made from a hard and strong wood such as oak. We also presume that the wing is strengthened by a metal frame. The lock socket inside, to the left of the niche-cut is worth noting. The face of the wooden gate is possibly decorated with bronze reliefs (Fig. 23).[66] The main hall is 12.40 × 7.27 m, its ceiling is 6.20 m high. It has a barrel vault ceiling whose sides are bordered by double moulded embossed cornice. This type of vault is observed in the Neo-Assyrian architecture and suggests an obvious influence.[67] The main hall is connected to four burial chambers, two in the north, one in the east and another one in the west. The left room in the north has two large niches in which terracotta or bronze sarcophagi were probably placed. The room on the right of the main hall was left unfinished (Fig. 20), judging from its location and design, it must have

[64] Bacque-Grammont 1981, 97, 101, 109; Tarhan 1986a, 307, 326, fig. 3.5–7, 10.

[65] Schulz 1840, 281–83; Texier 1842, 14; Lehmann-Haupt 1926, 145–48; König 1955–57, 262, nn. 65–69; Piotrovsky 1966, 304, fig. 60; Tarhan 1986a, 309, 335, figs. 1–19; 1994, 25, Fig. 4c; 2011, 310, fig. 10.

[66] *Cf.* Tarhan and Sevin 1975, 403, figs. 5, 8.

[67] Sevin 1987, 44–47, figs. 11, 17, pl. XI.15–16.

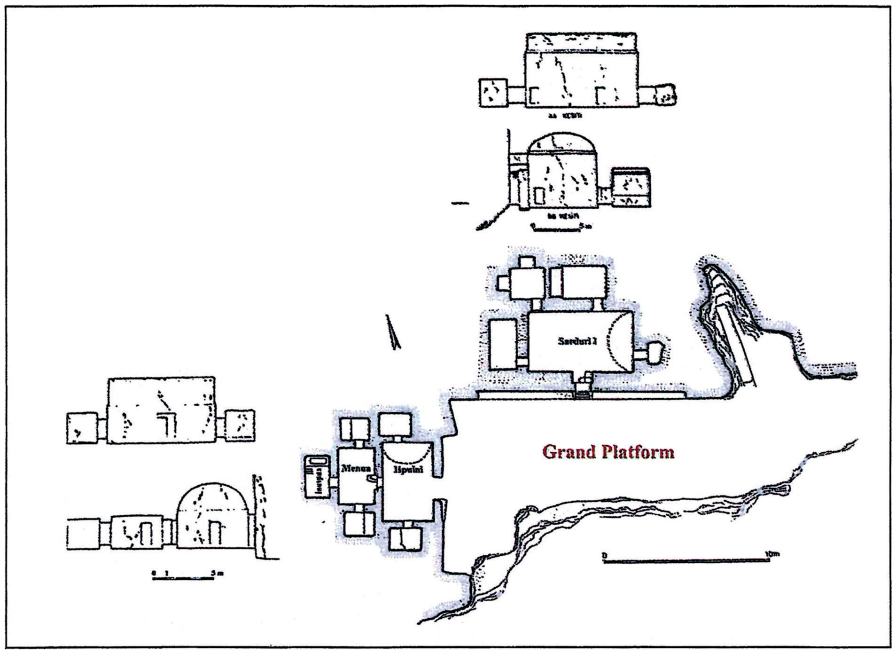

Fig. 20. Plans and sections of the monumental royal tombs at the 'Grand Platform' (drawing by Ü. Sirel).

Fig. 21. The monumental tomb of Sarduri I, on the left and the 'Eastern Tomb', on the right, from the south (photograph by E. Konyar).

Fig. 22. Façade of monumental tomb of Sarduri I, on the 'Grand Platform' and entrance of 'The Little Tomb', on left, under the platform, from the south (author's archive).

belonged to Sarduri I, the founder-king.[68] The Grand Platform was partly excavated and the tombs were cleaned by Erzen in 1972 and between 1973 and 1975.[69] The platform was also excavated by the author in 1987.[70]

Monumental Tomb of Ishpuini, Minua and Inushpua

It was named the 'Founders' Tomb' or 'Tomb of the Inner Fortress', referring to Sarduri I (Figs. 7, 20).[71] The formation of the eocene bedrock resulted in deep crevices extending to the west. This natural process continued in the historical ages and led to the incorrect assumption that it was earlier than the other tomb.[72] It is, however, clear that it was built later, judging from the entrance opening to the Grand Platform facing east, in contrast to those of the other monumental tombs (Fig. 20). We think that this tomb with two burial chambers back to back belonged to Ishpuini and his son Minua, who co-ruled the Urartian kingdom. The rooms are clear pieces of evidence of this

[68] Tarhan 1994, 25; 2011, 310.
[69] Erzen 1974, 549; 1976, 714.
[70] Tarhan 1989, 385, 413, figs. 34a–b, 414; plan of the Grand Platform and Monumental Tomb in fig. 35.
[71] Schulz 1840, 284; Lehmann-Haupt 1926, 145; König 1955–57, 261, pl. 126; Piotrovsky 1966, 306, 308, fig. 62.
[72] Schulz 1840, 284; König 1955–57, 261.

Fig. 23. Inner view of the main hall, entrance and window (photograph by E. Konyar).

co-operation.[73] The front chamber which should have belonged to Ishpuini is also called 'the main hall'. It measures 5.90 × 5.30 m and its ceiling is 5.00 m. The chamber has a barrel-vaulted ceiling and the vault borders have embossed mouldings indicating that Assyrian influence continued (Fig. 24). The main hall gives access to two chamber rooms and the second hall behind them, which should have belonged to Minua, is connected to three burial chambers, the third of which may have belonged to Inushpua. Its dimensions approximate a small chamber. The fact that the halls are connected back to back in gradually diminishing dimensions seems to signify common reign, i.e. the triple rule of the father, son and grandson: Ishpuini-Minua-Inushpua (*ca.* 810–785/780 BC).[74] In the south-western part of the platform and right below it, is a little burial chamber.[75]

[73] Tarhan 1986a, 308, 335, fig. 16; 1994, 25, figs. 3–4c; 2001, 161, fig. 4. According to Sevin, the tomb belongs entirely to Ishpuini (see Sevin 1987, 44, fig. 12; see also Tarhan 1994, 26).

[74] Tarhan 2007d, 122; 2011, 311.

[75] See below 'The Little Tomb under the Grand Platform', p. 737.

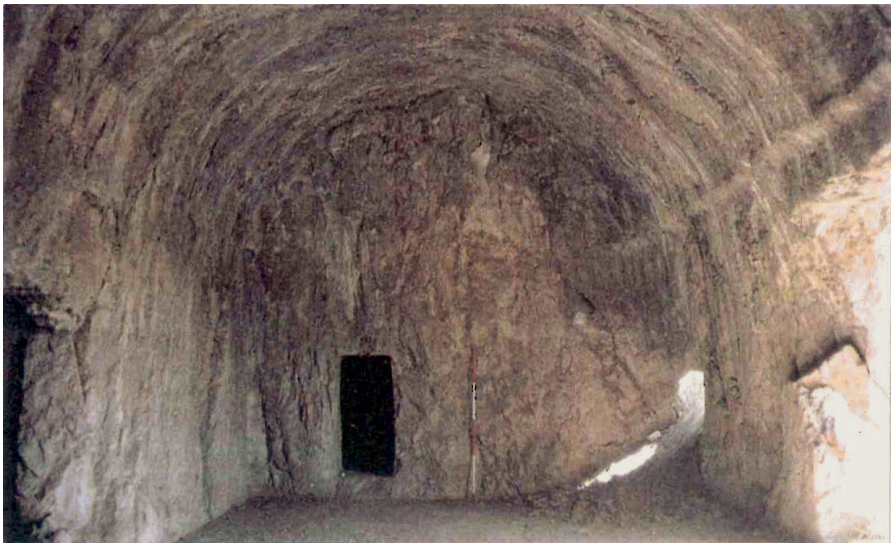

Fig. 24. The tomb of Ishpuini, inner view of the main hall (author's archive).

The so-called 'Eastern Tomb'

Named as 'Ostkammern' (Eastern Rooms) by Lehmann-Haupt, this monumental tomb is found to the east of the Eastern Moat (Fig. 7). It is also called the 'Tomb of Sarduri', referring to one of the most successful Urartian kings, Sarduri II (*ca.* 756–730 BC).[76] The monumental rock platform, the steps descending to it, the high steps before the entrance, the bench along the façade and the façade architecture itself add much to its monumental appearance (Figs. 21, 25). The façade and the entrance face south. The main hall measures 9.40 × 6.15 m; its ceiling is 6.00 m high. Three burial chambers open to a main hall (Fig. 26). They are located to the east, west and south of it. The ceiling is plain and is bordered and decorated with an embossed cornice.[77]

[76] Lehmann-Haupt 1926, 149, 152–53. V. Sevin suggests that it is earlier than the Tomb of Argishti I (see Sevin 1987, 45, where he asserts that it might belong to Minua; see also Tarhan 1994, 27).

[77] Schulz 1840, 286; Lehmann-Haupt 1926, 149; König 1955–57, pl. 127; Piotrovsky 1966, 306, 309, fig. 63; Tarhan 1986a, 309, 337, figs. 20–23; 1994, 26, fig. 3; 2001, 162, fig. 5; Sevin 1987, 44, fig. 13.

Fig. 25. 'Eastern Tomb' from the west (author's archive).

Cremation Tomb

This is the monumental tomb in the far east, located at the south-east tip of the Rock of Van (Fig. 7). Two stepped rock platforms where cremations took place and rock steps extending to the cliff form the frontal architectural features of the tomb (Fig. 27). The façade looks south and the burial chamber is rectangular in plan (Fig. 28). It measures 7.00 × 4.10 m; its ceiling is 3.25 m high. Horizontal niches were hewn into the eastern, western and northern walls, extending almost from one end to the other. Seventy-eight round base sockets were hewn into these niches. It is evident that cremation vessels, i.e. urns, which held the ashes and bones of the deceased, were placed in these sockets in two rows. As is well known, cremation and inhumation coexisted in the Urartian kingdom and this royal tomb demonstrates the existence of the former in the Tushpa Citadel.[78]

[78] Schulz 1840, 289; Lehmann-Haupt 1926, 157. For details and the latest research, see Sevin 1980, 152–63, figs. 1–3, pl. 1A; Tarhan 1986a, 309; 1994, 28, fig. 3; 2001, 162; 2011, 214, fig. 13.

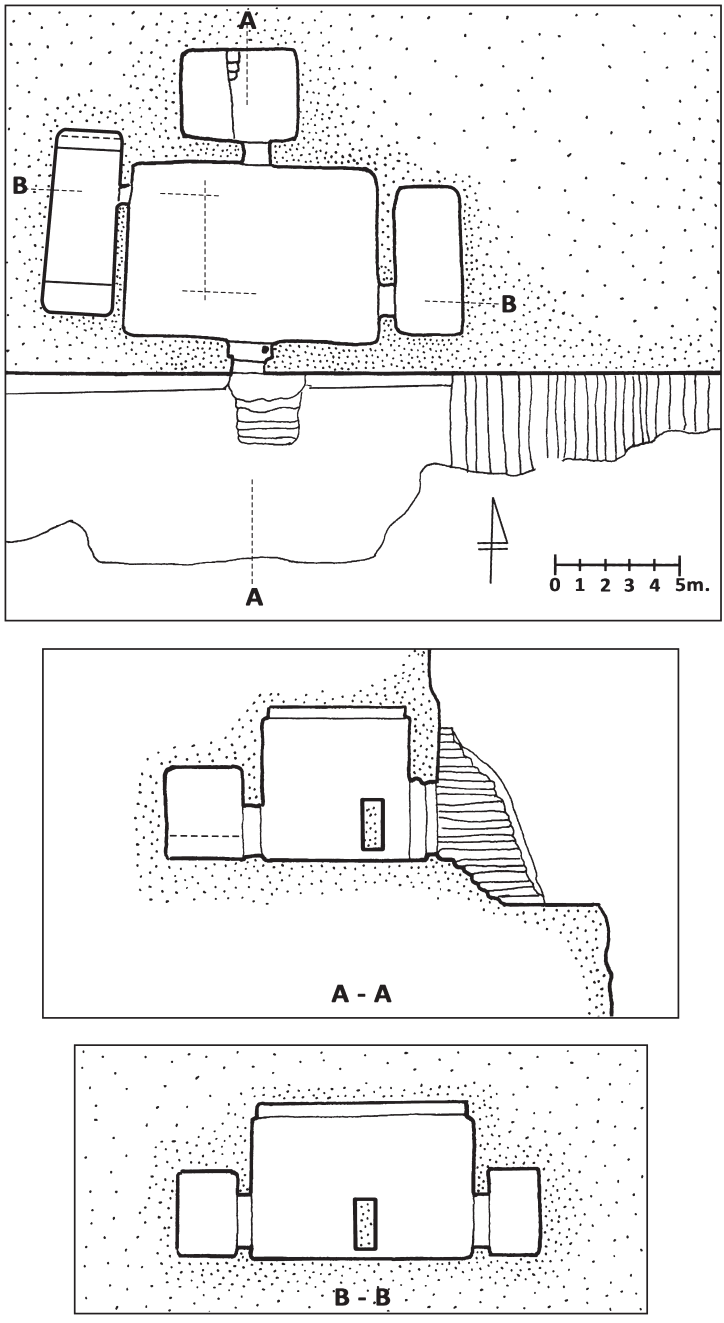

Fig. 26. Plan and sections of the 'Eastern Tomb' (drawing by Ü. Sirel).

Fig. 27. Entrance of the 'Cremation Tomb', from the South (photograph by E. Konyar).

The Monumental Tomb of Argishti I

It is the monumental royal tomb in the far west, outside the Western Moat, immediately to the west of the 'New Palace' and the only tomb whose owner is known from its inscription. It is referred to as the Horhor Caves in literature (Fig. 7). The annals of the king were inscribed in eight columns on the main rock on two sides of the entrance at the southern façade (Figs. 30–31).[79] These inscriptions are referred to as the Horhor annals. The Russian mortar bullets shot from below in the 1915–18 siege, damaged these magnificent inscriptions. The annals end with 'curse prayer' in the eighth column on the right-hand side of the entrance:

> Through the greatness of the god Haldi, Argishti, son of Minua speaks … Whoever will destroy this inscription, whoever will offend against (it) … The gods Haldi, Teisheba, Shivini, (all) the gods annihilate him(self), (his) family, the posterity of his descendants (from) beneath the son … (Fig. 32).

[79] König 1955–57, no. 80; *UKN* 127–154; Schulz 1840, nos. 2–7; Payne 2006, no. 8.1.1, figs. 75a–82, layout of columns at p. 176.

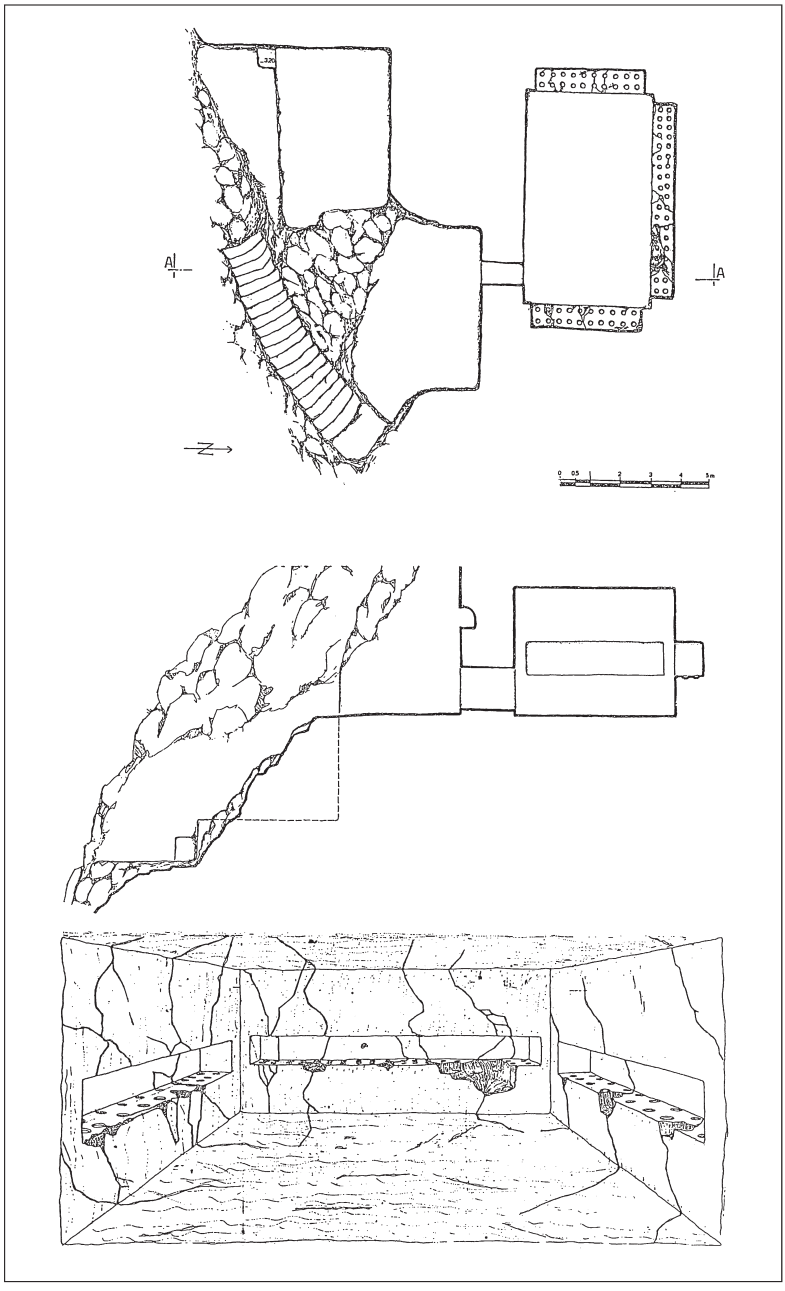

Fig. 28. Plan and section and inner view of the 'Cremation Tomb' (drawing by Ü. Sirel).

Fig. 29. Inner view of the niches in the 'Cremation Tomb' (photograph by E. Konyar).

Fig. 30. The annals of Argishti I and the rocks steps down to the entrance (author's archive).

Fig. 31. The entrances of the monumental tomb of Argishti I and 'The Little Horhor Cave' (author's archive).

It is the largest and the most expansive inscription on bedrock in the ancient Near Eastern world. All of the Urartian royal annals and this one in particular, whether on bedrock or on steles, held a special place among its contemporaries. Unlike the Assyrian examples, the Urartian accounts of military expeditions and wars did not include horrible and bloody descriptions, nor did Urartian art produce such scenes.

The entrance of the tomb is reached via the steps descending from above. Close to the stairs is a deep rock niche, which, according to Lehmann-Haupt, was a 'Wachtzimmer' (guard room) (see Fig. 33).[80] The sloping gully that was formed to prevent rain and snow water seeping down the upper bedrock from flowing towards the entrance and over the inscriptions on the left-hand side. This, in a way, served both as a gutter and an eave and is an example of a shrewd application of rock architecture. The natural rock fracture right behind the rock ridge where the curse prayer is to be found was an advantage in

[80] Lehmann-Haupt 1926, 120.

Fig. 32. The curse prayer at the end of the annals (author's archive).

the construction of this structure. The rock steps right before the entrance reach up to the threshold (Figs. 31, 33).

Interestingly, on the western wall of the main hall is written the name of Charles Texier. This disgraceful action of this very well-known figure – which, today, has become an historical document – appears with a thousand others.[81]

The main hall measures 10.50 × 6.05 m; its ceiling is 3.52 m high. The hall has a plain ceiling and is connected to five burial chambers, two in the north, one in the east and two in the west, all connected to each other. Thirty-four rectangular niches in the walls of the main hall and the chambers add vividness

[81] Tarhan 1985, 181.

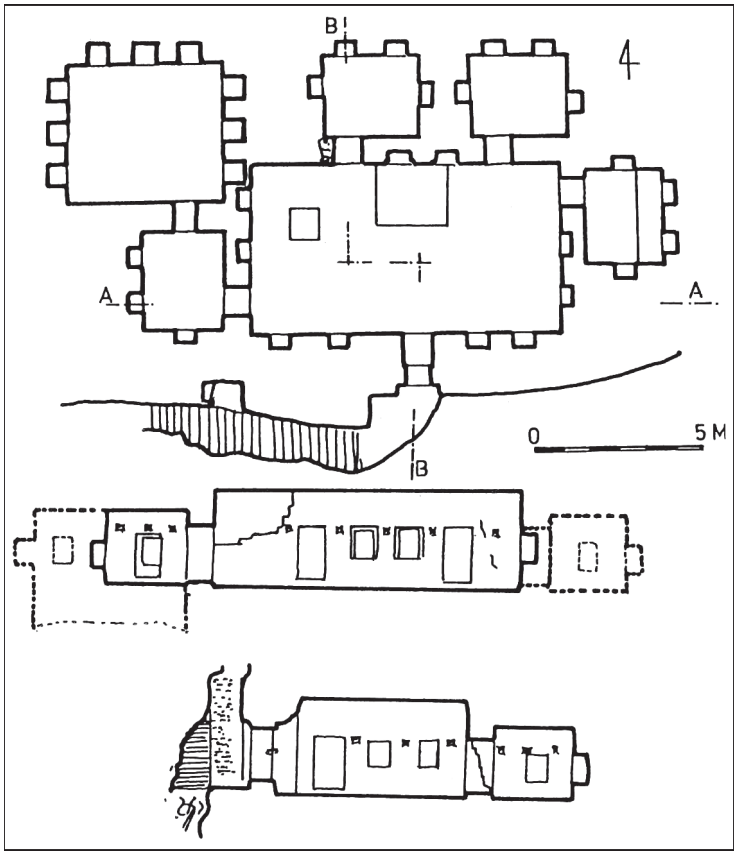

Fig. 33. Plan and sections of the monumental tomb of Argishti I (drawing by Ü. Sirel).

to the interior. These niches probably held burial gifts, cult objects and urns (Fig. 33). The appliqué sockets and traces above the doors and niches were for fixing or, in my view, hanging bronze oil lamps or religious protective objects such as 'bulls' heads'. On the floor of the main hall, at the foot of the north wall across from the entrance, traces of a large base that is roughly square in shape and that was neatly flattened draws attention. According to Lehmann-Haupt, this is where the king's sarcophagus stood (Fig. 34). Traces of a smaller base is observed in front of the north-east corner. Another remarkable feature of the tomb is the low floor level of the largest chamber in the north-west which is currently beneath debris (Fig. 33).[82]

[82] Schulz 1840, 272–74; Layard 1853, 395; Lehmann-Haupt 1926, 120–30; König 1955–57, 262, 264; Piotrovsky 1966, 302, fig. 58; Tarhan 1986a, 310, figs. 24–27; 1994, 28; 2011, 315,

Fig. 34. The niches in the main hall and the traces of the king's sarcophagus base (author's archive).

Notable Results

These monumental tombs are the mysterious structures of the 'ancestors' cult' and their locations indicate that the dwellers of the Tushpa Citadel, particularly the royal family, lived together with their founder grandfathers and fathers' spirits. This is a distinctive, mysterious feature of Urartu and is observed in no other Iron Age capital, Phrygian or Lydian. It perfectly captures the basic philosophy of the Urartians, which is 'Eastern' in character and which served as a material and spiritual 'protective shield'.[83]

In addition, these splendid royal tombs show that; in ancient Anatolia, the mausoleum tradition, as a part of rock architecture, began with the Urartian kingdom. Although they seem unreachable, ceremonies were held in the royal tombs from time to time and the tombs were visited by the elites, among whom were the king and his family members, attendants and priests. The magnificent

318, fig. 14a–b; Salvini 1986, 34, figs. 10–11; 1988, 21, fig. 3; 2006, 164–65, fig. 7; Sevin 1987, 44, fig. 14.

[83] Tarhan 2004, 336, 340; 2011, 319.

rock architecture was enlivened only by necessary and functional architectural elements. The austerity on the façades, in particular, is perhaps the most elegant and plain expression of the 'eternal silence of death'.[84] It is evident that the Achaemenids were inspired by this monumental architecture to a great extent.[85]

New Palace

It is outside the Upper Citadel and lies on the wide area stretching to the tomb of Argishti I, built on gradually descending platforms towards west. It is bordered by a steep cliff in the south (Fig. 7). We believe that it was built by Argishti I, judging from its closeness to his tomb.[86] The 1987–90 campaigns conducted by the author unearthed most of the structure. The floors of 12 rooms with varying dimensions were entirely, and the walls partly, hewn out of bedrock (Figs. 35–36). The rooms comprise of storage (Fig. 36-A) and service areas on the lower stories of the palace, while rooms of the royal family and ceremonial rooms are found on the upper stories. The foundation beds, *in situ* ashlar, foundation limestone blocks and thickness of the walls point out to a monumental building, whose counterparts have been brought into light in the Urartian centres such as Çavuştepe and Adilcevaz. The multi-storied structures depicted on bronze plaques in Urartian art give a clear idea of what the palaces looked like.[87]

Bronze votive discs placed in the foundation beds hewn into bedrock are among the most interesting *in-situ* finds. The existence of this practice in Urartu was first discovered during the Toprakkale-Haldi temple excavations of Erzen.[88] The terrace wall extending towards the north of the palace is another example of Urartian rock architecture. The 'sloped road' which provides access to the Upper Citadel passes over the Western Moat running in front of this wall and reaches the Entrance Gate (Figs. 36–37).[89] In my opinion, there was a drawbridge over the moat (Fig. 38).

[84] Tarhan 2007d, 122; 2011, 319.
[85] Sevin 1987, 55; Salvini 2006, 163; Tarhan 2007d, 122; 2011, 319.
[86] Tarhan 1989, 377.
[87] Tarhan 1989, 374–79, 392, fig. 1.22, 393, figs. 2–3, 396–402, figs. 6–17; Tarhan and Sevin 1990, 356–58, figs. 1–4, 12; Tarhan 1994, 35–37, plan in fig. 12; 2001, 162, fig. 7; 2011, 319, 322, figs. 16–17.
[88] Erzen 1962, 398–400, figs. 10–12; Tarhan and Sevin 1990, 357, 362, cat. nos. 1–3, 370, fig. 11; Tarhan 2011, 321.
[89] Tarhan and Sevin 1990, 357, 365, fig. 1; Tarhan 2011, 322, fig. 17.

Fig. 35. ‘New Palace’ from the west (author’s archive).

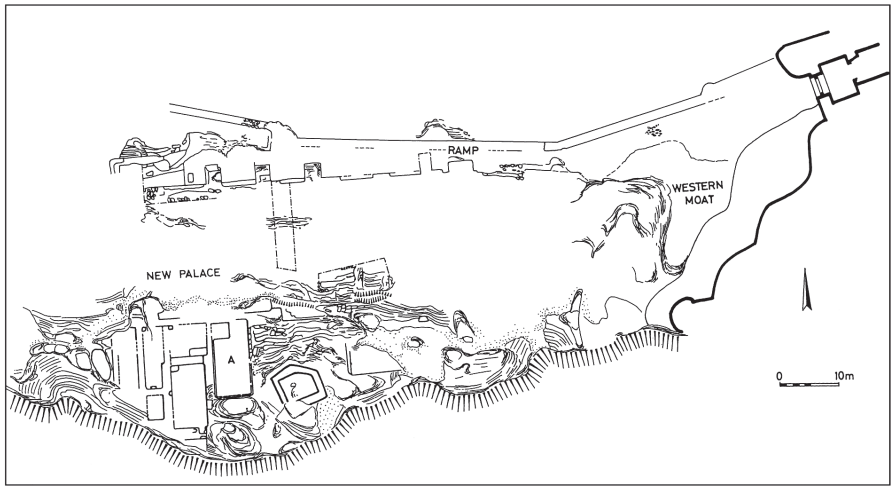

Fig. 36. Plan of the ‘New Palace’ (drawing by Ü. Sirel and A. Şakar).

Fig. 37. Western Moat and the main gate of the Ottoman period, on the left, from the west (author's archive).

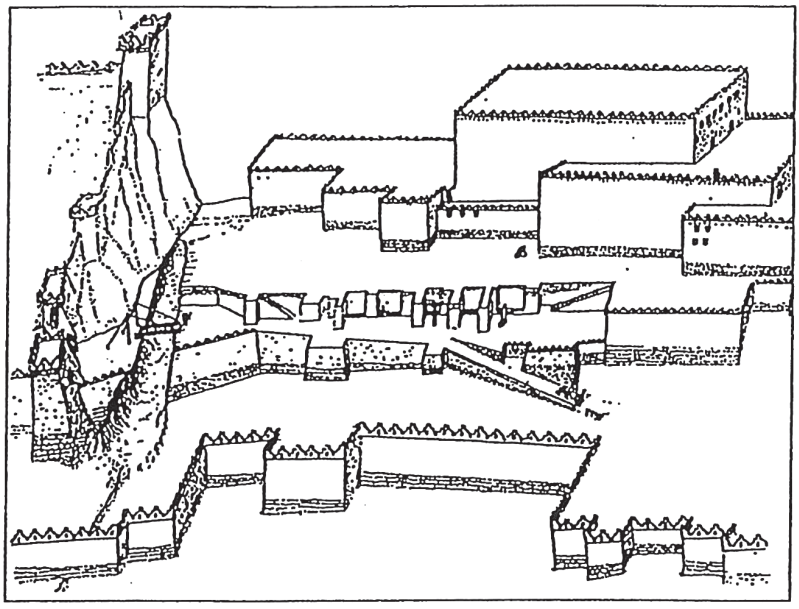

Fig. 38. Tentative reconstruction of the 'New Palace' (drawing by author).

The *sirshini* of Minua

This monumental building is located on the northern slope and opens to a natural terrace below the Upper Citadel (Figs. 7, 40). It was entirely hewn out of bedrock. It is a rectangular structure whose dimensions are 20.50 × 8.00 m; the ceiling is 2.60 m high, while the width of the entrance facing the north is 8.00 m. It is one of the structures that can be safely dated thanks to its *in-situ* inscription on the bedrock (Figs. 39–40):

> Minua, son of Ishpuini, built this place sirshini. Minua speaks: whosever will move (them) somewhere, whosever will steal cattle (?) from there, whosever will offend this inscription, whosever will compel another to carry out these (acts), let the gods Haldi, Teisheba, Shivini; annihilate him (from) beneath the sun.[90]

Referring to G.A. Melikishvili's translation, Salvini interprets *sirshini* as a 'stable for the sacrificial animals';[91] Schulz, terms it as 'La grande caverne';[92] Lehmann-Haupt calls it 'Menuassaal' and adds that '… it is now used as the stockyard for the garrison there …'.[93]

Fig. 39. Inner view, entrance and inscription of Minua's *sirshini* (author's archive).

[90] Schulz 1840, no. 16; König 1955–57, no. 60, n. 10; *UKN* 63; Salvini 1986, 31–44; Payne 2006, no. 5.4.1, fig. 49.
[91] Salvini 1986, 36.
[92] Sculz 1840, 294.
[93] Lehmann-Haupt 1926, 31.

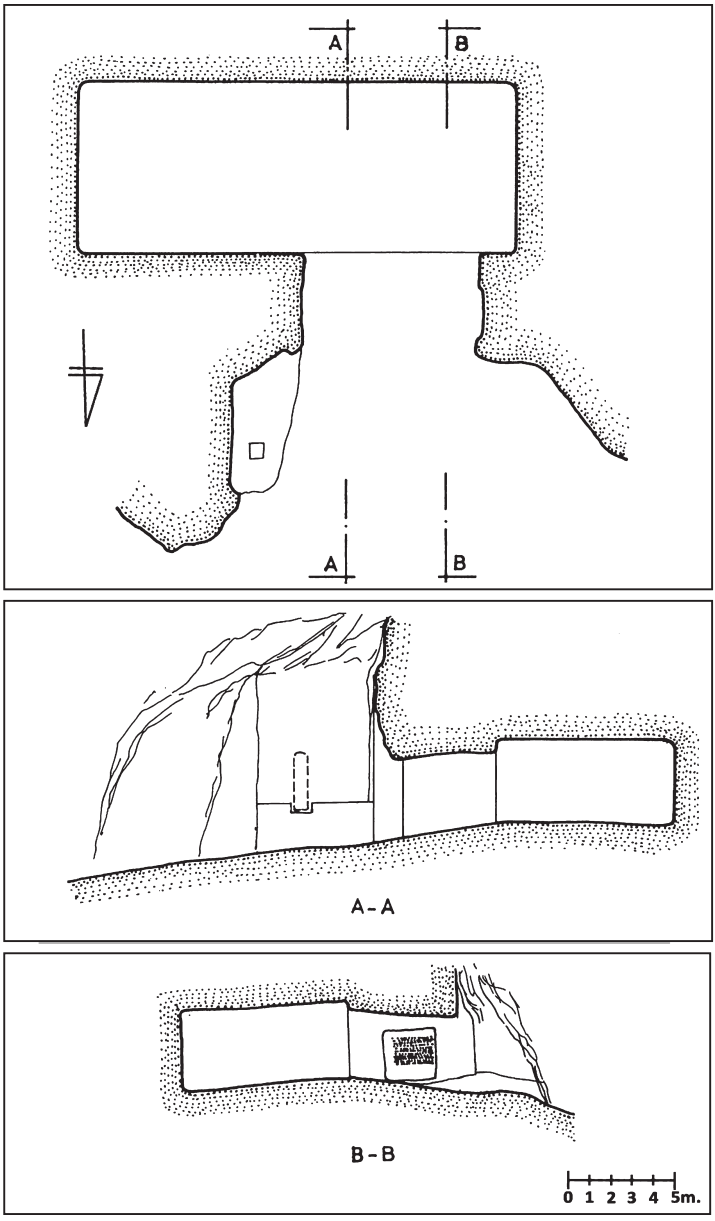

Fig. 40. Plan and sections of Minua's *sirshini* (drawing by Ü. Sirel).

I brought the whole structure to light during the 1989–90 campaign by removing the hundreds of years of debris.[94] The wide entrance, which allows for easy ingress and egress of the herds, is reached via a slightly sloped road, whose surface was notched to prevent the sacrificial animals from slipping. Outside the *sirshini*, to the east of the entrance, a high rock platform draws attention. At its centre is a regular cavity that appears to be the socket of the stele i.e. *pulusi*, which, in our opinion, must have been related to the purification of the sacrificial animals (Fig. 40).[95]

The *Tarmanili* of Minua

On northern slope of the Rock of Van, to the west of the 'Sacred Area of Mother and Daughter', three rock inscriptions sharing the same text (Figs. 7, 41) were carved on separate panels: 'Through the might of the god Haldi Minua, son of Ishpuini, has built this tarmanili'. The meaning of *tarmanili* remains obscure, but it was described as a 'spring' because of its relation to water and is also known as 'fountain of Minua.[96]

Sacred Area of Mother and Daughter

This monumental sacred area, built by Sarduri II (*ca*. 756–730 BC), is located on the north-eastern slope of the Citadel (Figs. 7, 42). The sacred area is located on a rock platform that is 40 m long in east–west direction. The widest part of the platform is 12 m and the platform becomes narrower to the east as a result of the bedrock's formation (Fig. 43). With the construction of strong fortification walls in the north, there appeared an empty area in the narrowing space and a large terrace was built by filling this area. A low bench, 0.50 m high above the platform stands against the main rock from the south, west and north. We had seen similar prior examples on the Grand Platform and in front of the 'East Tomb'. Religious ceremonies were attended sitting on this bench. A cavity, horizontal and long – looking like a niche – is found to the east, in other words, to the left of the niches. It is probably a socket of a stone or bronze relief. The cavity above the entrance of the Cremation Tomb is another similar example.

[94] Tarhan and Sevin 1991, 431; 1994, 844.
[95] Tarhan 1994, 33–35, fig. 11; 2011, 322, 324, figs. 18a–b.
[96] König 1955–57, no. 59 a–c; *UKN* 92a–c; Payne 2006, no. 5.4.2, figs. 57–59. For the new excavations in 2012 and the very interesting finds, see Konyar 2013, 30.

Fig. 41. Inscriptions of Minua's *tarmanili*, from the north (author's archive).

Fig. 42. Sacred area of the 'Mother and Daughter' from the north (photograph by A. Çilingiroğlu).

The upper surface of this sacred area should be closed. The blizzards coming from the north and the freezing cold weather made it impossible to perform ceremonies here. In my opinion, the king was seen off to battle field from here and then, when he returned, he was welcomed again here with ceremonies. This was probably a magnificent tradition of the 'King Cult' he had established. The width and depth of the channels where sacrificial blood was drained shows that intensive sacrificing was in practice. Considering the fact that these ceremonies were held frequently, all the herds in Van region would not have been sufficient! Therefore, we believe that the sacrifices were only made during times of battle and harvest.

This is the only example of its kind in the Urartian monumental architecture. The most remarkable elements are in doubles. The eastern niche is 5.70 m high, 2.70 m wide and 2.20 m deep. The western niche, on the other hand, is 6.80 m high, 2.60 m wide and 2.30 m deep. The eastern niche is slightly in front indicating a hierarchy. The huge basalt steles rising on the bases are also in double. The inscriptions, which extend partly over the niche walls, include the chronicles of the king, repeated twice (Fig. 43). It is locally called 'Maiden with her mother/mother and daughter/Analıkız'.[97] If we remember what Schulz had to say, this place is known as Hazine Kapısı (the Treasure Gate).[98] It consists of two monumental rock-cut niches which contained inscribed monumental steles, a large platform, rock cut benches and channels for draining the blood of the sacrificed animals (Figs. 42–43). It was excavated in 1916–17 by Marr and Orbeli (Figs. 44–45).[99] The inscription on the eastern and southern walls of the western niche and the inscription on the stele and on its base provide information on the reign of Sarduri II (Fig. 45).[100] These annals can be amended with the aid of a monumental stele found at the Surp Pogos Church in the Old City of Van.[101] This stele had originally stood in the eastern niche which is now empty. Beside is the canal for the draining of blood during the sacrifices. Unfortunately, these inscriptions contain no information about this sacred area. On the rock bench in the eastern corner, near the western niche, are two hewn bases for securing steles which were apparently related to the religious functions and rituals of this sacred place (Fig. 43). The western part of the sacred area and neighbouring areas, as well as the connection between

[97] Tarhan 1994, 28.

[98] Schulz 1840, 290–92; Lehmann-Haupt 1926, 29–32.

[99] Marr and Orbeli 1922, pls. I–XIX.

[100] Marr and Orbeli 1922, pls. VII–XIV; König 1955–57, no. 103; *UKN* 155.

[101] König 1955–57, nos. 102–103; *UKN* 155–156; Salvini 1986, 39; Payne 2006, no. 9.1.2, figs. 93–100. For all inscriptions including Surp Pogos stele, see *UKN* 75–78, nos. 1–11, 156; appearance of façade and draft plan, 158.

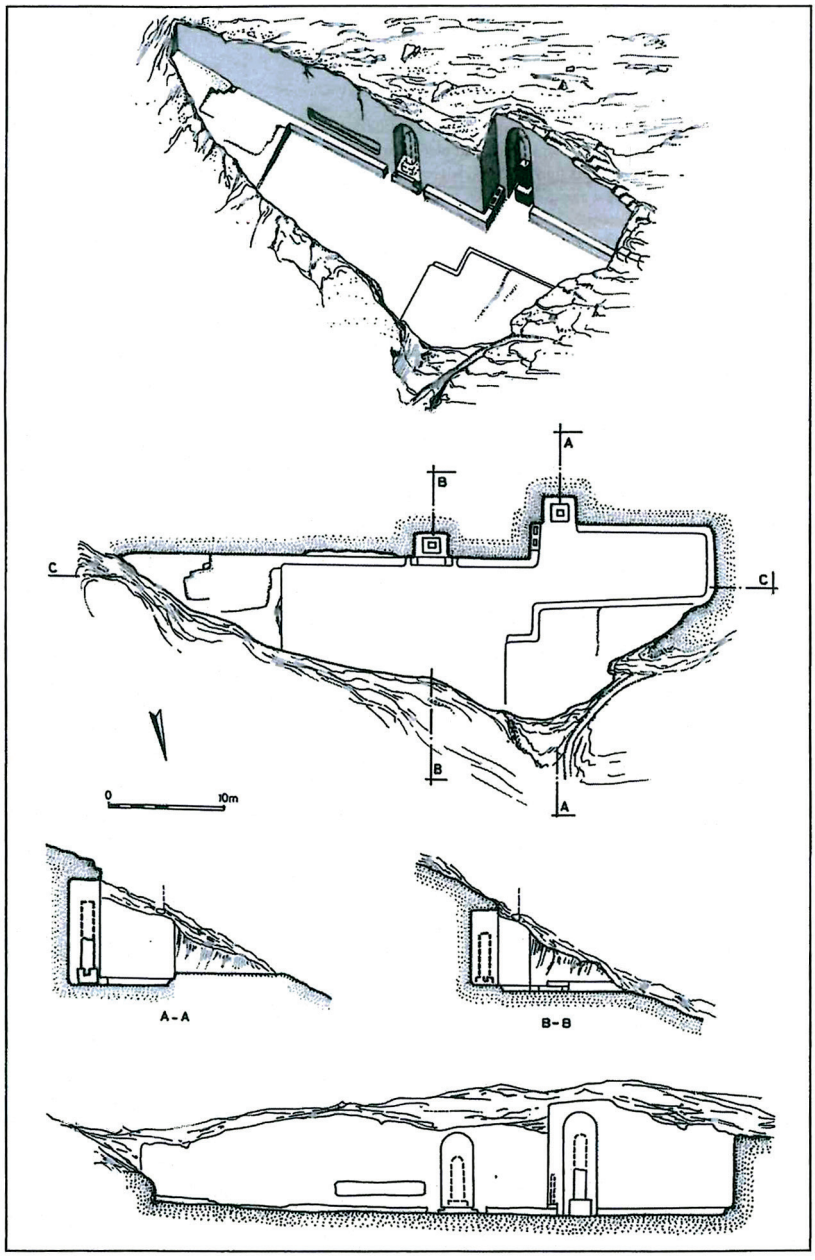

Fig. 43. Axonometric view of the sacred area, plan and sections (architect Ü. Sirel).

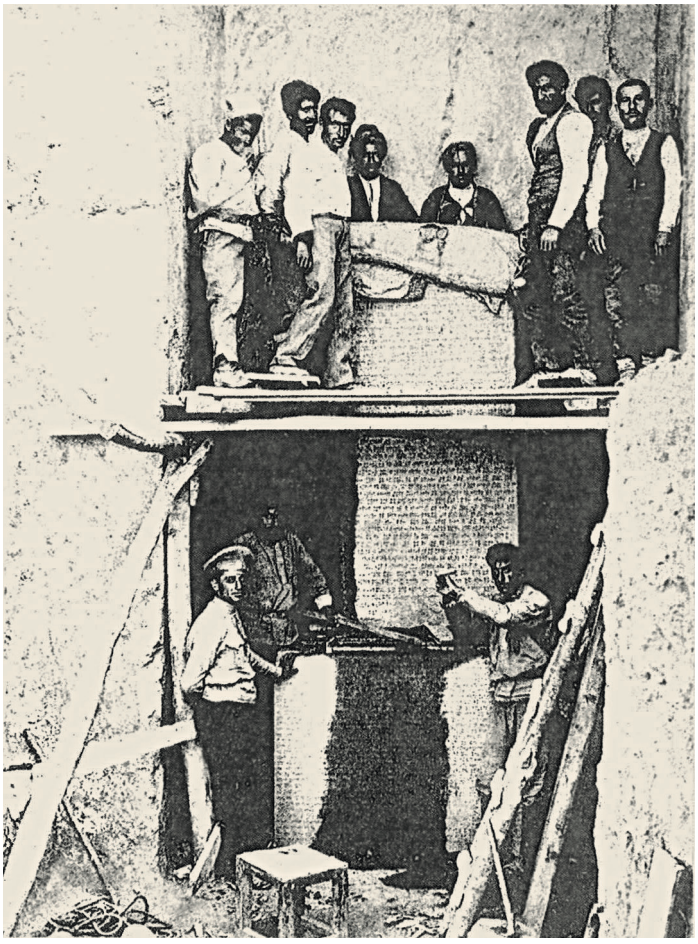

Fig. 44. The Russian excavations by Orbeli and Marr in 1916–17. The annals of Sarduri II, on the monumental stele, Russian soldier and workers (after Marr and Orbeli 1922, pl. 13).

the sacred area and the fortress were excavated by the Lakes in 1938–40.[102] The rock-cut foundation sockets, that were apparently for placing ashlar stones and hundreds of stone blocks lying around, indicates that a building complex existed here. The sacred area, located outside the boundaries of the Citadel, was surrounded by strong walls on the northern side.[103]

[102] Lake and Lake 1939, 74, figs. 1–4; K. Lake 1940, 179; Korfmann 1977, 173, 182, 196, 199, pls. V–X.

[103] Tarhan 1994, 28–31, figs. 5–7; 2011, 325.

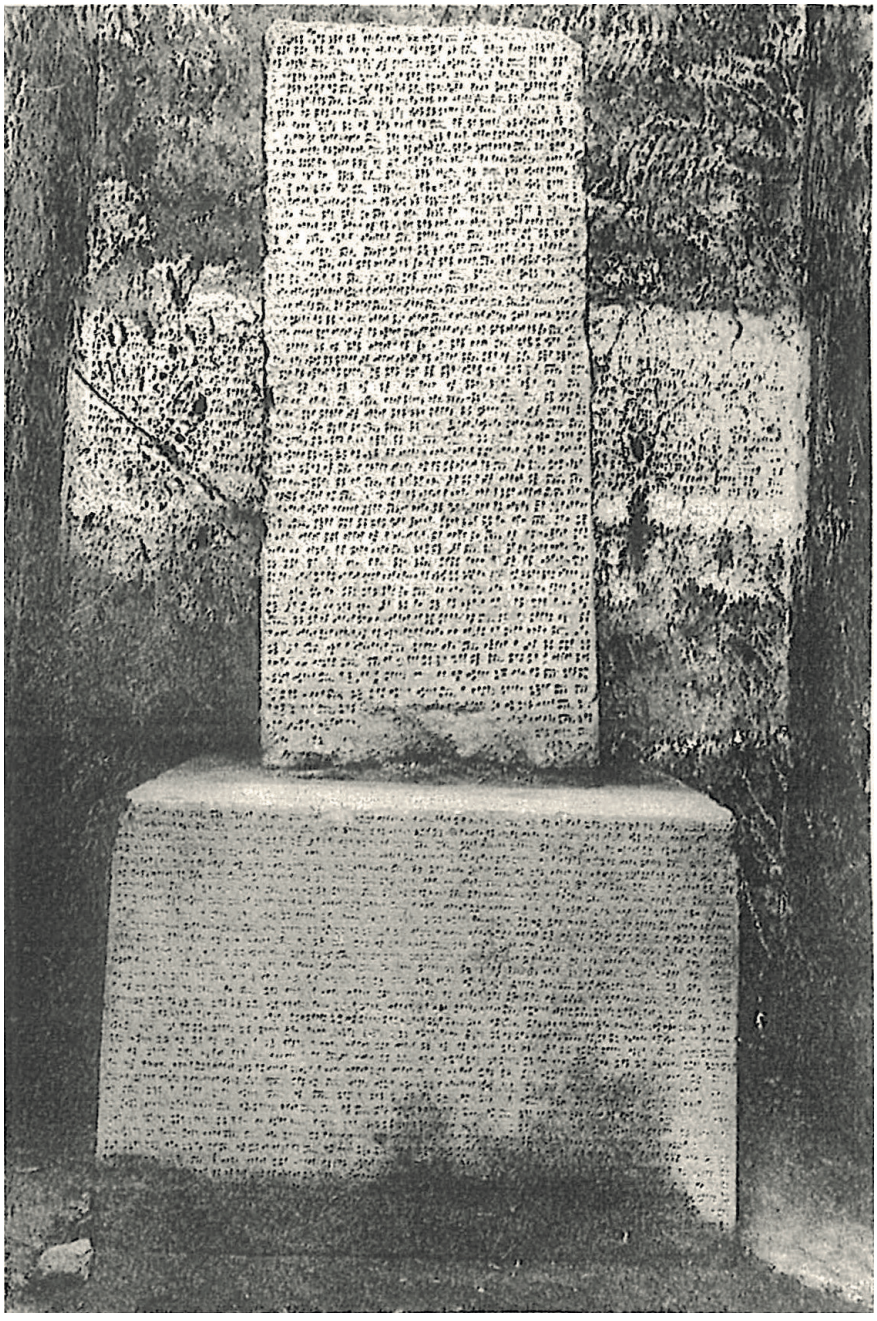

Fig. 45. Monumental stele and base, after excavations (after Marr and Orbeli 1922, pl. 14).

Steles were dedicated to the deities, particularly to Haldi. The practice of erecting steles in sanctuaries is quite common. They are 'divine' symbols and, in a way, 'shadows of the gods'.[104] The lines following the usual titles of the king in the introduction of the chronicle are noteworthy: Sarduri says: '… I have given order. One sheep for Haldi and one for the divinity of Sarduri shall be sacrificed …'. If this interpretation is true, then it implies the deification of the king. It also implies that the sanctuary belonged to the King Cult which was established under Sarduri II. In this context, we interpret Uç Kale, the monumental structure with two rooms at Çavuştepe, to be the temple of the King Cult of Sarduri II. It should be noted that the 'temple of the ancestors' cult' in the Inner Fortress of Tushpa has a double cellae. According to Schulz, locals called it the 'Treasure Gate'. In 1827, the whole area had already been covered with soil and only the upper surfaces of the niches were visible.[105]

Layard reports that he conducted a brief excavation in 1849 and unearthed a stele that was partly buried.[106] Lehmann-Haupt also investigated the site in 1898 and used the term 'Schatzgrotte' (treasure cave): '… A wide canal was opened into the rocks below the Treasure Gate. It splits into two branches, one heading towards north-east and the other towards east. The latter is probably for sacrifices …'.[107] Its sanctity continued even at that time. Every Thursday, young girls and boys slid through the canals to make a wish to receive a marriage proposal (Fig. 46). Immediately to the north of the sanctuary are the cupola of the highly respected Abdurrahman Gazi (the saviour of Van), and the historical cemetery.[108] What Schulz told about the sanctity of this place in his accounts attracts attention:

> … The second empty space on this inscription is the cross hewn into the inscription by the Christian Armenians. Even the Armenian inscriptions towards the end were very badly written. As we pointed out earlier, those who arrived here first, sanctified the place with the approval of the church. Most probably, this place was considered to be a sacred place by the Assyrians [Urartu was not known yet] and in later ages, it was regarded rather as a place for hadj by the Muslims. The place was visited in particular by Muslim women who objected strongly when I took away pieces of letters. Muslims generally hang various votive objects and pieces of cloths here and I tried to copy the inscriptions from behind these hanging votive objects. According to the beliefs of these people, lots of treasure was hidden in this cave. Below the Treasure Gate is a grate and underneath the grate is a room full of gold and diamonds. Two men with swords and torches guard this treasure and do not allow any living creature to enter inside. Supposedly, a large

[104] Tarhan 2007c, 762; 2011, 325.
[105] Schulz 1840, 291.
[106] Layard 1853, 397.
[107] Lehmann-Haupt 1926, 30.
[108] Tarhan 1986a, 297, fig. 5; 2011, 327.

Fig. 46. Monumental niches, canals for sacrificed animals blood (author's archive).

> snake slept by this inscription every night and disappeared in a hole in the rock to the right of the cave with the sunset in the mornings. The locals tried very hard many times to clear my doubts about this and showed me traces of the snake as proof. But the traces seemed very suspicious to me. Although I waited there from time to time, in the mornings for at least two hours until sunset, I never came across the mentioned snake …[109]

The aforementioned stele was taken to Van Museum in 2010 by my assistant, Erkan Konyar, who continues the Van excavations.

'Blind Windows'

The T-shaped rock niches surrounding the slopes of the Citadel represent the 'blind windows' (Fig. 7). They might have been the symbols of some sort of religious belief or passages to the unknown world of gods, goddesses and ancestors. The Citadel is protected all around by these niches (Fig. 47). They

[109] Schulz 1840, 291.

Fig. 47. The rock niches of 'blind windows' (author's archive).

should be compared with the 'monumental rock niches'. The Yeşilalıç and Meher Kapısı monumental rock niches from Ishpuini and Minua periods resemble the gates of Haldi's *susi* (tower-temple) and it was believed that gods would appear through these gates at specific times. In other words, during a religious ceremony, when the gate of the temple was opened, the cult statue of the deity would appear, i.e. epiphany.[110]

Achaemenid Tombs in the Shadow of Urartu

Looking at the monumental buildings in the heart of the Achaemenid empire, namely in Parsa I Persepolis, Naqsh-i Rustam, Pasargadae or Susa; if Tushpa had indeed become the capital of the 13th century (Herodotus 3. 93) under Darius I, the location of the monumental buildings is a question mark.[111] We would like to mention only three little tombs.

[110] Tarhan and Sevin 1975, 409; Tarhan 2007a, 130; 2007b, 273, fig. 4.1–2; 2011, 327.
[111] Tarhan 2007d, 120.

'Tomb of the Little Hor Hor Cave'

Immediately below the monumental tomb of Argishti I (Figs. 7, 31), is the temple structure named as the 'Tomb of the Little Horhor Cave'. The stairs leading to the tomb were destroyed.[112] The interior design reminds us of those of the Achaemenid period, particularly that of Darius I's tomb at Naqsh-i Rustam. The existence of four niches lined along the northern wall of the rectangular, long hall is the fundamental point of resemblance. The niches are thought to be designed to serve as sarcophagi or *klinai* (Fig. 48).[113] We believe that they were opened in the Achaemenid period and the rock steps were also destroyed in this period, after the deceased had been interred. Hence, the Achaemenid philosophy of 'inaccessibility' overlapped with 'inaccessible' architectural features.[114]

The Tomb Below the Inner Fortress

A small tomb immediately below the Inner Fortress is also remarkable (Figs. 7, 49). It is located on the highest place among the rock tombs in the Citadel. The tomb was discovered by A.N. Kaznakov during the Russian occupation, in 1916. Piotrovsky suggested that it served both as a sanctuary and as a tomb.[115] The entrance opens into a small square hall, through which three small burial chambers on different levels, oriented in a south to north direction, are reached. This alignment is reminiscent of the arrangement of the rock-cut sarcophagi in the tomb of Xerxes I at Naqsh-i Rustam. In my opinion, it would have been a disrespectful act for the Urartian kings to build their tombs high above those of their ancestors.[116]

The Little Tomb Under the 'Grand Platform'

It is at the south-western corner of this platform.[117] It may be related to the Achaemenid period (Figs. 7, 19.10, 22, 50).

[112] Schulz 1840, 274; Lehmann-Haupt 1926, 122, 128; Piotrovsky 1966, 302, 304, fig. 59; Tarhan 2007d, 123.

[113] Tarhan 2007d, 123, 127, fig. 1.16, 129, fig. 7.1, 3; 2011, 319.

[114] Tarhan 2007d, 121.

[115] Piotrovsky 1966, 310, fig. 65 (the plan and sections were drawn by Kaznakov and the original copy of fig. 65 belong to him); Tarhan 1994, 2, fig. 3; 2007d, 123, 127, fig. 1.17, 129, fig. 7.4, 2; 2011, 319.

[116] Tarhan 2007d, 123; 2011, 319.

[117] Lehmann-Haupt 1926, 162; Piotrovsky 1966, 306, fig. 61.

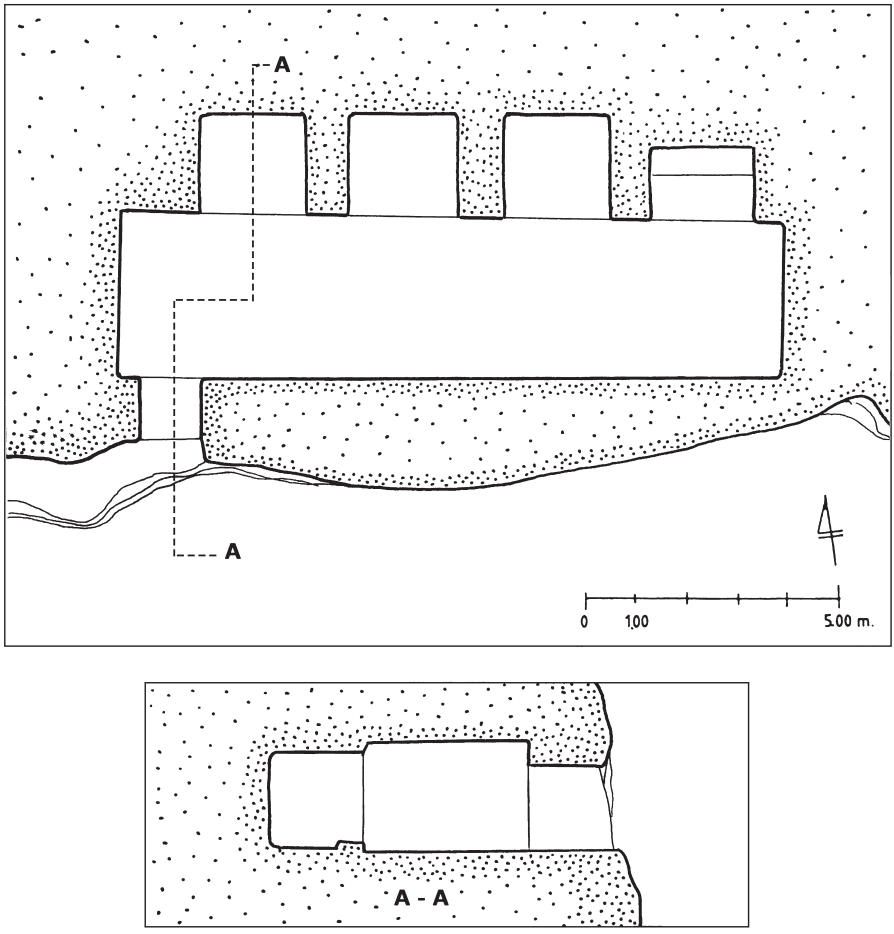

Fig. 48. The tomb of the 'Little Horhor Cave', plan and section (drawing by Ü. Sirel).

The Inscription of Xerxes I

While the royal tombs at Naqsh-i Rustam near Persepolis are splendid in terms of their genuine design and rich façades, they are virtually inaccessible. They represent the unmatched power of the kings under the protection of Ahura Mazda. The inaccessible location of the inscription carved by the order of Xerxes I (485–464 BC) on the southern face of the cliff of Van Citadel clearly reflects this phenomenon (Figs. 7, 19, 51). It can neither be read nor be

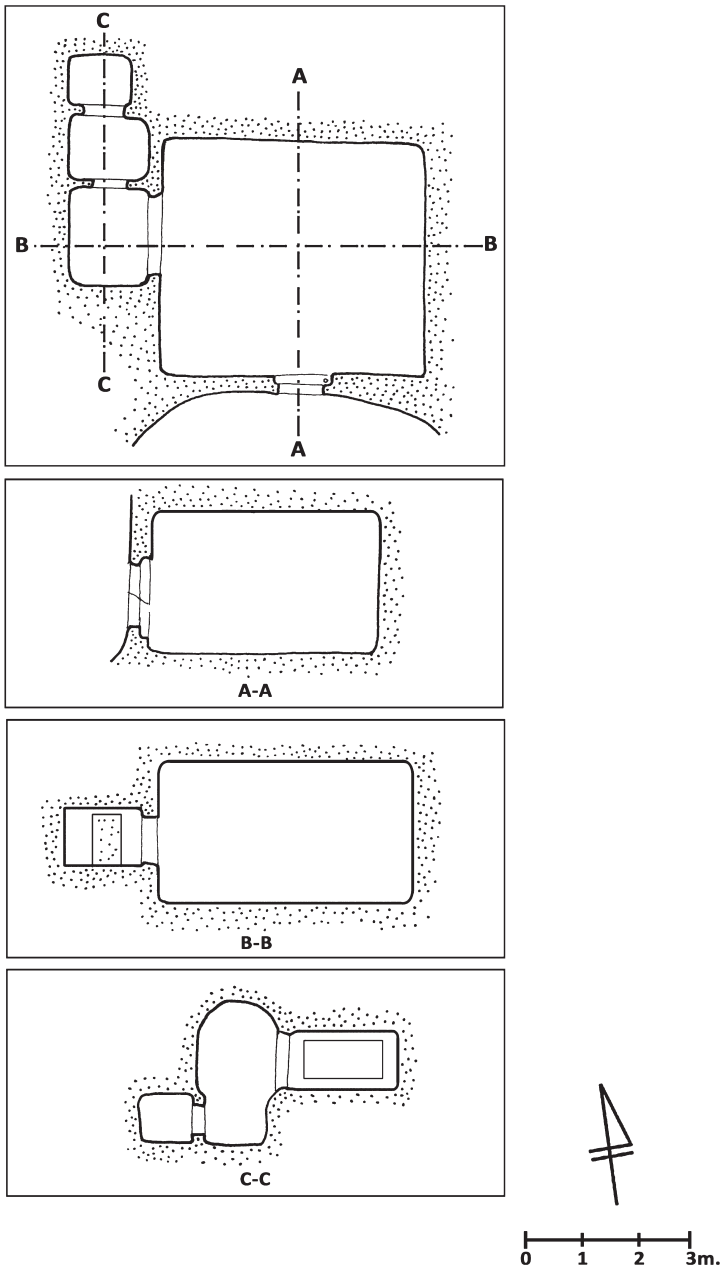

Fig. 49. The plan and sections of the tomb below the 'Inner Fortress' (drawing by author).

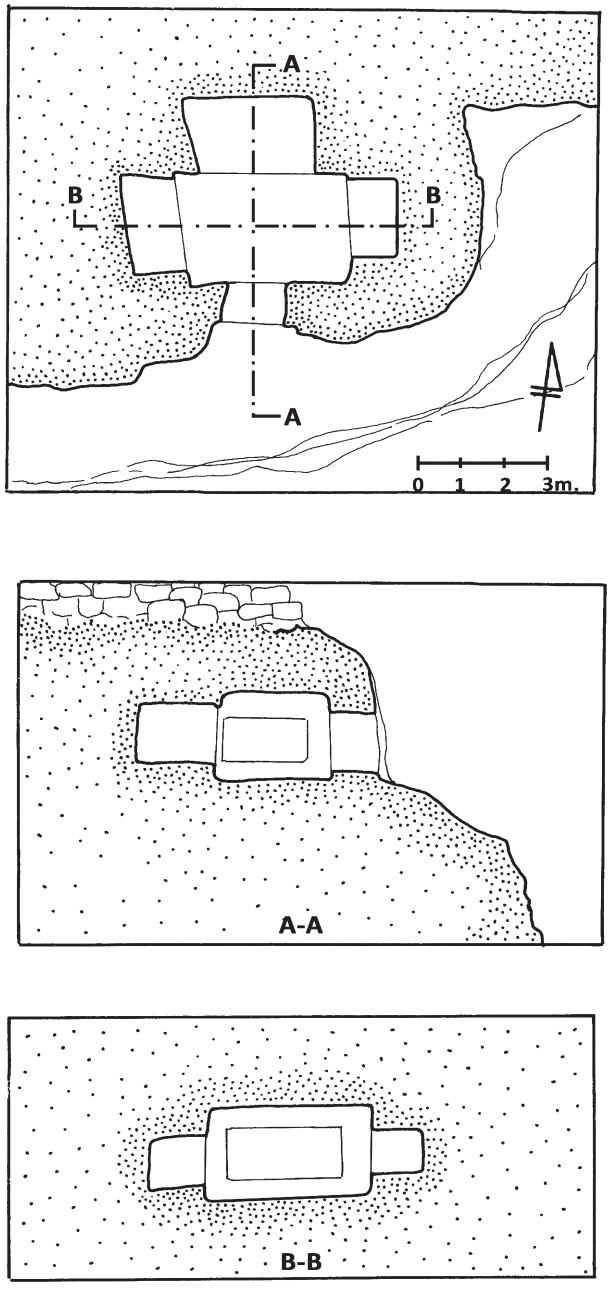

Fig. 50. The little tomb under the ‘Grand Platform’, plan and sections (drawing by Ü. Sirel).

Fig. 51. Grand Mosque-Ulu Câmîi in 1876 and at the background the inscription of Xerxes I (author's archive).

approached, but the new ruler challenges the friend and the foe alike in three languages, i.e. in Persian, Elamite and Babylonian (Fig. 52).[118] Urartian inscriptions in Tushpa, on the contrary, are to be found in accessible locations.[119]

> A great god is Ahuramazda, the greatest of gods, who created
> This earth, who created that sky, who created man, who created
> happiness form man, who made Xerxes king, one king for all, one rule for all.
>
> I am Xerxes, the great king, the king of kings, king of all kinds of peoples
> with all kinds of origins, king of this earth and wide,
> the son of king Darius, the Achaemenid.
>
> King Xerxes says: king Darius, my father, my favour of Ahuramazda
> built much that was good, and he gave orders to dig this niche out,
> but because he did not make an inscription, I ordered this inscription to be made
>
> May Ahuramazda and the other gods protect me, my kingdom, and what I have made.[120]

On Layard's visit to Van in 1849:

> … The only inscription at Van that I could not copy was the trilingual tablet of Xerxes. It is on the faced inaccessible part of the rock, about seventy or eighty feet above the plain. Not having a glass of sufficient power, I was unable to distinguish the characters from below. As it had been accurately transcribed by

[118] Schulz 1840, 277; Layard 1852, 394, 400–01; Lehmann-Haupt 1926, 159.
[119] Tarhan 2011, 320.
[120] Kent 1953, 65; Tarhan 2007d, 120–21, 129, figs. 6–7.

Fig. 52. The inscription of Xerxes I (author's archive).

> Schulz, and resembles those of the same king at Persepolis and Hamadan, I did not think it is necessary to incur any risk or expense in reaching it by means of ropes or scaffolding …

This inscription was copied, with a strong telescope by Schulz, and is published with the rest of his transcript.[121]

During his visit to Van in 1876, Burnaby reports that '… An English was let down from here by a cord some years ago … About 200 feet below this spot there is an inscription cut on the stone …', and describes the inscription as: 'Imagine four gigantic sheet of the Times placed one alongside the other and covered with huge quaintly formed letters …'[122]

Tozer arrived Van in 1879. In his words:

> … This vast tablet with its numerous lines of cuneiform letters, as it lies outspread on the face of the rock, has been compared to a sheet of the 'Times' newspaper, and no description could give a better idea of it. The inscription is trilingual written in three parallel columns …[123]

[121] Layard 1853, 400.
[122] Burnaby 1877, 234.
[123] Tozer 1881, 343.

No other Achaemenid inscription is known in the Van region. Nor can any site be dated to the period of Persian rule. As we mentioned above, however, no monumental buildings have been unearthed that match either the inscription or its content. One fact is at least certain: the new rulers preferred to draw themselves behind the strong fortifications of the citadel. The satrap himself, like the Urartian kings in the past, was safe and secure in the Inner Fortress at the Upper Citadel, behind the magnificent and strong walls. It is highly probable that, after the fall and sack of Tushpa, all of the monumental royal tombs served the same purposes in the Median and Achaemenid periods, as well as in the period of the Ottoman empire. The new rulers quickly overcome the problem of space by making use of these tombs. The absence of a distinctive Achaemenid building activity might be due to this secondary use of the tombs …[124]

What Evliyâ Çelebi reported regarding this inscription and the cuneiform is also interesting: '… On the façade of this inner fortress that is facing the city … at the centre of a rather flat rock, they blew up the rock making a square form and wrote an exemplary script that I could not read as it was in the form of keys and symbols …' (*Seyâhatnâme* 4. 544).

Lower City of Tushpa – the Mound of Van Citadel

It is certain that the Lower City was first founded on the sheltered area to the south of the Citadel, bordered by the Rock of Van and protected from the harsh northern winds in winter (Figs. 8, 53). Archaeological data from the soundings of the Lakes support this view.[125]

The Old City of Van, which was founded in mediaeval times and surrounded with walls and ditches, covers this site. Stone foundations found during the canal works immediately outside the Ottoman walls, at the south-eastern end of the city, proved that the Lower City had been protected by strong fortifications like those of Aznavurtepe, Karmir-Blur or Assyrian and North Syrian cities.[126] Probably after the 9th century BC, the Lower City extended beyond the walls and a new district was formed around the whole Citadel including the mound of Van Citadel in the north (Fig. 7). The mound is located 70 m from the northern slopes of the Citadel, extending in the plain parallel to the

[124] Tarhan 2007d, 121–23.

[125] Lake and Lake 1939, 7, figs. 3–4; K. Lake 1940, 179; Korfmann 1977, 185, 196, 198, pl. IV.II.

[126] Tarhan and Sevin 1994, 881; Tarhan 1994, 39.

Fig. 53. The mound of Van Citadel from the north. In the background the sloped road leading to the Upper Citadel, on the right 'Western Moat' and 'New Palace' (author's archive).

Rock of Van. It is a low ridge, 1 km long and 70 m wide, oriented in an east–west direction. It gradually rises towards Lake Van, where it reaches a height of 7 m.[127] The actual dimensions are unknown. Some sources say that during Tamerlane's siege, in 1387, large-scale earth works were carried out in order to reach the fortifications by filling in the then visible ditch in the north of the Van Citadel. The current trench which destroyed the north-western end of the mound may be related to this event.

The earliest engraving showing clearly the ditch around the Citadel belongs to Poullet, published in 1668 (see Fig. 54). Another possibility is the extensive use of soil in this area for repairs, construction and filling work in the Citadel in mediaeval times, as the western part of the mound is close to the sloped road leading to the citadel's entrance.[128] In his accounts, Evliyâ Çelebi also gives details about this incident: '… The area beneath the rock on the northern side is empty, there is no city. One side is a reedy area and a marsh, the western side is where Tamerlane piled soil …' (*Seyâhatnâme* 4. 541).

The Lakes' small-scale excavations in 1939 showed that the site was a stratified mound.[129] In 1956 Burney investigated the site during his surveys in the region and named it the 'Mound of Van Fortress', where he discovered an intensive Early Bronze Age settlement. Burney conducted research at the site again in 1959.[130] Erzen, Bilgiç, Boysal and Öğün described the mound as

[127] Tarhan 1994, 37–39, fig. 13; 2011, 327.
[128] Tarhan 2011, 324.
[129] Lake and Lake 1939, 7, figs. 3–4; K. Lake 1940, 179. See also Korfmann 1977, 185, 196, 198, pl. 4.2.
[130] Burney 1958, 178.

Fig. 54. Van Citadel and the Old City of Van in the 17th century (after Poullet 1668, 362: 'Le chateau de Van').

an important housing site and they also carried out soundings at its western end in 1963.[131]

Archaeological material unearthed by the author during campaigns between 1989 and 1991 is significant for the light it sheds on the settlement history of the Van region. It holds an important place together with the Tilkitepe, Kalecik,

[131] Erzen *et al*. 1961, 20; 1963, 35.

Dilkaya, Karagündüz and Yoncatepe excavations. The excavations also decidedly proved that the Lower City was not limited to the area to the north of the Citadel but extended to the south as well.

The mound was first inhabited in the 3rd millennium BC, since the Early Bronze Age. Although the earliest levels did not produce architectural features, Karaz/Early Transcaucasian sherds of the 3th millennium BC give an idea about the stratigraphy. Also remarkable are fragments of polychrome 'Urmia Ware' of the 2nd millennium BC.[132]

The characteristic finds of the Iron Age are more abundant. Pottery with grooved rims, known from the Keban and Karakaya regions, found in a wide area covering Armenia in the north, Malatya-Elazığ in the west and the western shores of Lake Urmia in the east, are quite common and reflect a pre-Urartian cultural unity. We believe that they are precursors, representing the archaeological identity of the Ur(u)atri and Nairi Confederations located in what we term the Archaic period of Urartu between the 13th and 9th centuries BC.[133]

The levels that fall into the era of the Urartian kingdom have two phases. The early phase comprises a large building dated to the 8th century BC, which covers a large area. It appears to be a 'mansion' of an Urartian elite. Only 15 rooms have been unearthed, some of which were paved with mud-brick blocks. The stone-paved space must have been the central court. Its design reminds the houses at Karmir-Blur and Armavir-Blur. Strong stone foundations were laid on thick layers of ash suggesting a heavy conflagration (Figs. 55–56).[134] It is plausible to imagine that these rich houses in the district were occupied by the elite families. The late phase of the 7th century BC was heavily destroyed by an intense burial activity, but yielded rich small finds.

'Pithos Grave' (Fig. 57)

An *in-situ* pithos of the early phase was transformed into an intramural burial, in which the body was placed in the hocker position and covered with a large pot. The grave-goods comprised iron arrowheads and a typical stone seal with a griffon pattern. In the late phase of the Urartian period, this is a unique example in terms of burial and appearance.[135]

[132] Tarhan and Sevin 1991, 434, 436, cat. nos. 1–7, 455, fig. 23.1–7; Tarhan 1994, 47, 52, figs. 30.1–10, 31.1–6, 53, fig. 32 stratigraphy V–IV; 2011, 331.

[133] Tarhan and Sevin 1994, 851, 857–59, cat. nos. 29–41, figs. 7, 10, 3.18; Tarhan 1994, 44, 47, figs. 30.1–10, 32 stratigraphy III; 2011, 332.

[134] Tarhan and Sevin 1991, 434, fig. 16, 437, cat. no. 18, fig. 21.1, no. 31, fig. 22.5; 1994, 850; Tarhan 1994, 44, fig. 25.5; 2011, 332.

[135] Tarhan 1993, 279, figs. 1–3; 1994, 41, 43, 44, fig. 19; 2011, 332. For excavations in 2012, new plan, section and finds, see Konyar 2013, 28.

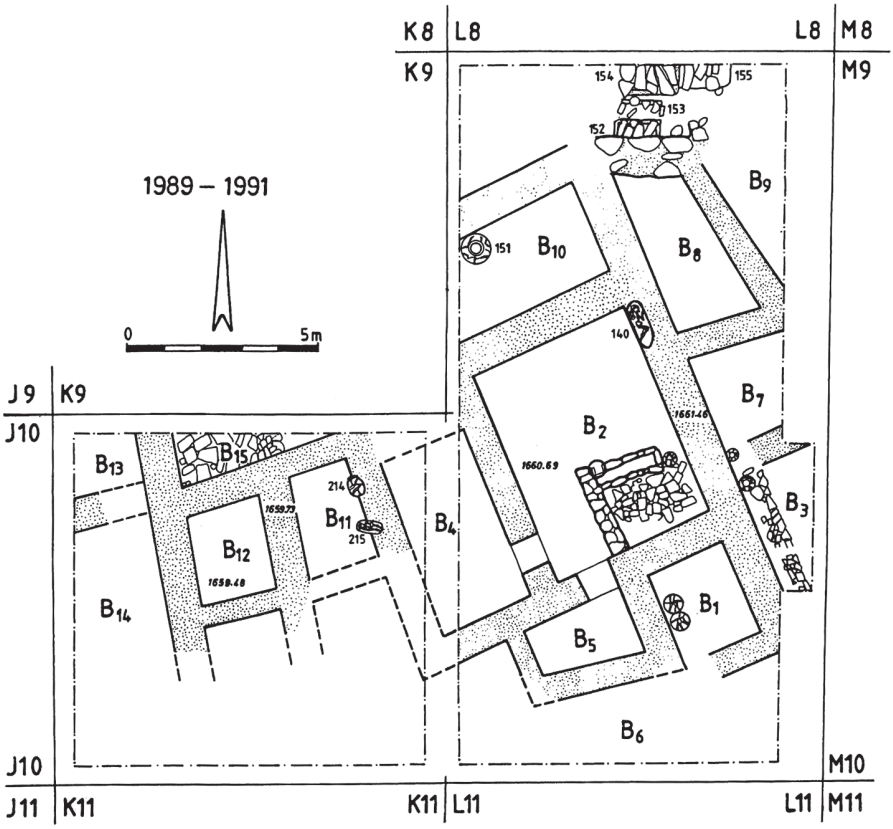

Fig. 55. Plan of the Urartian building complex, dated to the 8th century BC, 'Pithos Grave' (no. 151) and the Late Iron Age burials (nos. 140, 152–155, 214–215) (drawing by Ü. Sirel).

Following the collapse of Urartu, the mound was used as a burial ground not only in the Late Iron Age, but also in the Middle Ages and in more recent times. This is clearly shown by a total of over 200 burials.[136] Of the 145 skeletons and remains in the 104 graves, six are of foetuses, 35 are of babies, 29 are of children, 33 are of women and 46 are men.[137] Here burial levels remarkable for their rich grave typology acquired various identities which each new phase. They include Median, Achaemenid, Parthian and Late Iron Age examples: simple earthen graves, stone and mud-brick cist graves, etc. They offer

[136] I would like to thank again Erksin Güleç for all his assistance in this matter and for referring interns Çiğdem Özhan and Dilek Özbağ to our excavation team.

[137] Gözlük *et al*. 2004, 51.

Fig. 56. The Urartian building complex from the north,
at the background the sloped road (author's archive).

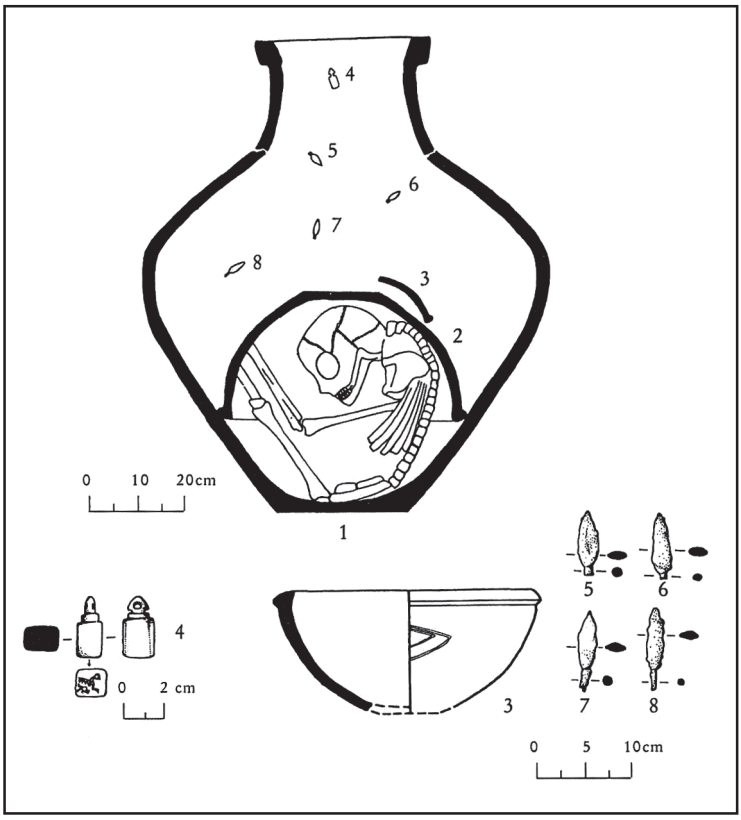

Fig. 57. The 'Pithos Grave' (no. 151) and its grave-goods (drawing by A. Özfırat).

new historical perspectives to the burial customs of ancient Anatolia in a chronological frame (Fig. 58).[138]

Here, I would like to mention two striking examples. Grave 152 from the fourth level is a unique and interesting example. After cremation, ashes and skeletal remains were placed in a wooden coffin, which was in turn wrapped with a double layer of leather. The leather was fastened to the coffin with iron nails. Its surface was decorated with circular notches made with a sharp knife.

[138] For grave types and small finds from the later phase of the 7th century BC, see Tarhan and Sevin 1991, 433–37, cat. nos. 8–13, fig. 19.1–6, no. 14, fig. 20.1, nos. 22, 25, 34, fig. 22.2, no. 26, fig. 22.1, no. 27, fig. 22.4, no. 28, fig. 22.8, nos. 32–33, fig. 22.6–7, no. 22.3, and figs. 11–13, 16; 1994, 848; Tarhan 1994, 39, figs. 15–18, 20; 2007d, 118, 123–24; 2011, 332.

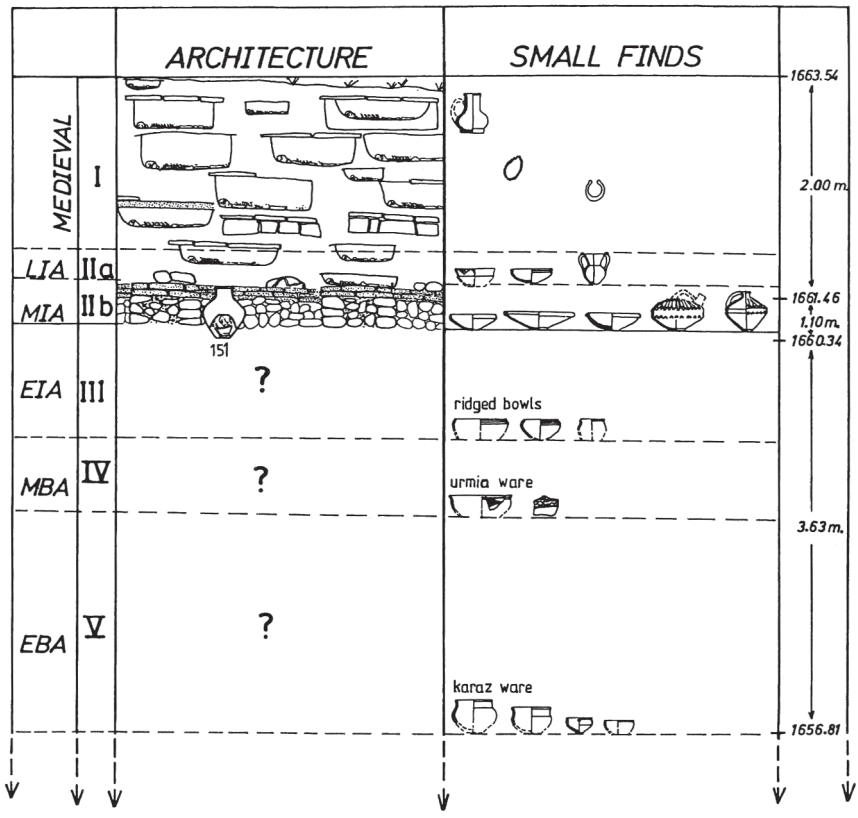

Fig. 58. The stratigraphy of the mound of Van Citadel (drawing by A. Özfırat).

The coffin was placed in a typical stone cist grave. No grave-goods were found. During the Third Anatolian Iron Ages Symposium at Van 1990, Charles Burney, Oscar Muscarella, Stephan Kroll, Julien Reid, Nicholas Postgate, David French, Peter Calmeyer and Peter Kuniholm examined the burial, which during the excavations had been preserved in our laboratory in the Istanbul University Centre for Historical and Archaeological Research in Van and said that they had never encountered a similar example.[139]

The burials of fifth level are represented by the graves 140 and 151. They are the earliest burials. We have already mentioned the Pithos Grave (151) above.

[139] Tarhan and Sevin 1994, 848, figs. 7–10; Tarhan 1994, 40, fig. 15; 2007d, 119, 128, fig. 4.

'Median Grave' (Fig. 59)

Burial 140 is a simple pit grave. The body lies in a flexed/hocker position on the stone foundation of the eastern wall of room B2 in Urartian buildings, as were burials 214 and 215. The skeleton belongs to a 47-year-old woman. Three bronze earrings in the skull near the ears, two small pots and drinking vessel with double handles were found as burial gifts. The stratigraphical

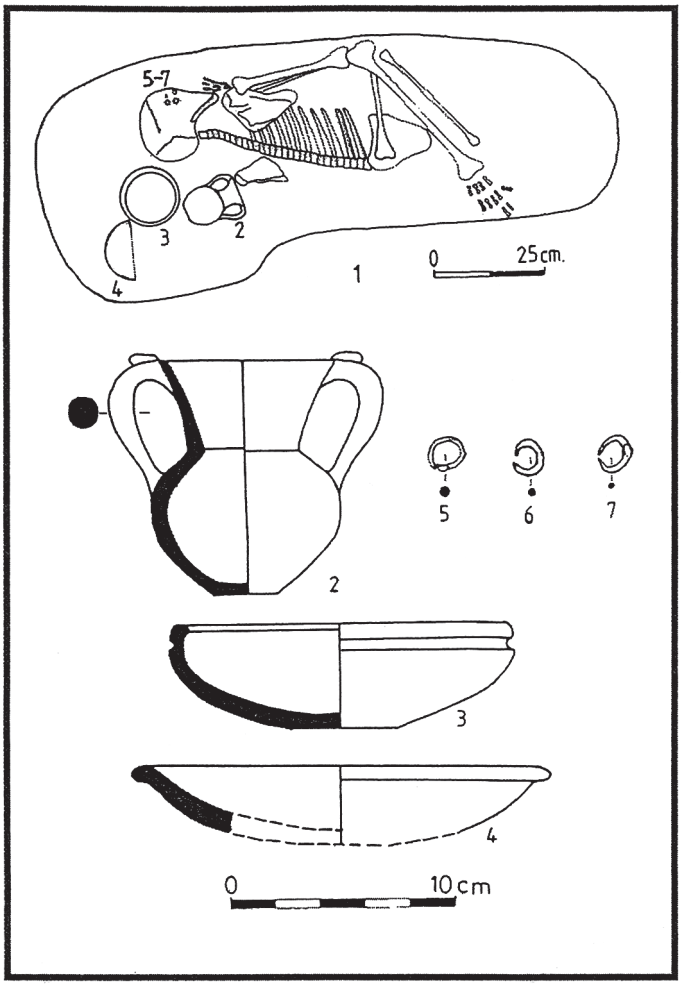

Fig. 59. Median grave (no. 140) and its grave-goods (drawing by A. Özfırat).

location and drinking vessel in particular suggest a post-Urartian date, probably contemporary with Hasanlı IIIA, thus pointing to the Median period. This type vessel appears frequently at most of the fortress in north-western Iran throughout the Achaemenid period. Thus, it appears that this stratum was related to the Median-Achaemenian-Parthian cultures of the Late Iron Age. Several pieces of pottery where found, both on the mound and in Van Citadel which could not be a signet to any particular building level.[140]

'Altintepe', the Necropolis of Tushpa

The rich cemeteries of Tushpa and the later 'administrative centre of Rusahinili/Toprakkale' cover a wide area starting from a few kilometres north of the citadel. Unfortunately, it suffered much from looters and illegal digs. It was named 'Altıntepe' ('Golden Hill') after gold artefacts found in some graves. Excavations and research by Sevin in 1997–99 revealed some intact graves. Grave types and rich grave-goods provided information on the social structure and prosperity of the dwellers in the Lower City. It is observed that inhumation and cremation co-existed.[141]

Following the Course of History

In the turmoil created by the rapidly changing balance of power between the end of the 7th and the beginning of the 6th century BC, the beginning of the end. A problematic period begins, archaeologically speaking: the finds, and the hiatus and connections between the phases, suggest the evacuation of the Lower City before a threat and an abandonment overall. Does the rarity of small finds indicate this phenomenon? A brief comparison between the mound of Van Citadel and the other Urartian settlements reveals the situation more clearly: The mound does not bear heavy traces of fire or destruction like Rusahinili/Toprakkale near Tushpa. In our view, the abandonment of the Lower City is a clear indication of the collapse of the Urartian kingdom. The kingdom fell after Scythian raids and the final blow came from the Medians, and Tushpa fulfilled its destiny.[142] Many people left genuine traces here:

[140] Tarhan 1994, 40, 42, fig. 17; 2007d, 120, 123, 129, fig. 5. For anthropological analysis, see Gözlük *et al*. 2004, 57, fig. 13.

[141] Sevin and Özfırat 2001, 179–83, figs. 1–8.

[142] Tarhan 2007d, 119.

Medians, Persians, Alexander the Great, Hellenes, Parthians, Eastern Romans and Byzantines, Abbasids, the Vaspurakans, Sasanids, Seljuks, Ayyubids, Ilkhanates, Karakoyunlu and Akkoyunlu, Turkomans, Safavids and finally the Ottomans and modern Turks.

Van and eastern Anatolia lived their 'golden ages' under the Urartian kingdom and later under the Ottomans (who secured possession from 1548 under Suleyman the Magnificent). Van Citadel was one of the strongest in the Ottoman period. The miniature Ottoman plan known as 'Seng-ü Van' is a very important document that shows settlement pattern of the Van Citadel and the Old City of Van. When compared with the European engravings and old photographs, the pattern can clearly be traced (Fig. 19).[143]

The earliest engraving we could find is in Poullet's work published in 1668 (Fig. 54). However, the appearance of the citadel and the city from the south is exaggerated especially in topographic terms.[144] In our opinion, it is especially important to mention clearly the citadel and the ditch surrounding the city; they are still in place today. Evliyâ Çelebi also tells about the wooden drawbridges over the ditch surrounding the Lower City that allow for entry to and exit from the city gates, operated with ropes wrapped around a wheel. The guardians used to raise them every night, place them against the citadel wall and tie them up from inside with chains (*Seyâhatnâme* 4. 546).

Jean Baptiste Tavernier, who visited Van in 1664, reported that the citadel was very strong.[145]

The city of Van, the magnificent city of olden times, the famous Turkish city that Evliyâ Çelebi could not stop mentioning in his accounts, still carries, since 1918, the resentfulness and sorrow of a deserted city.

Two old 'proverbs' are still remembered: 'Van in this world and paradise in the next'.[146] The appearance of the city and its magnificent citadel witnesses, even today, the meaning of the old saying, 'Dünyada Van, âhirette îmân' (Van in the world, belief in the next world).[147]

[143] Bacque-Grammont 1981; Tarhan 1985, 184, 190, fig. 1; 2011, 333, fig. 23.
[144] Poullet 1668, 362.
[145] Tavernier 1676, 249.
[146] For this proverb, see Lynch 1901, 39.
[147] Tarhan 1985, 186.

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